

Curriculum Best Practices: A Look at Wake Forest's Peers

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COMMON TRENDS

Several schools – Chicago, William & Mary, and St. John's College for example – have a curriculum that emphasizes a shared curricular experience and progression of learning over the four years of an undergraduate career. For example, William & Mary starts engaging and preparing students during the summer before their first year. They are required to complete online courses, and all students engage in a Common Book. Its new curriculum progresses over the course of the four years, with the sequence being completed with a required capstone, typically during the fourth year. Chicago's Core Curriculum similarly progresses along a four-year period, with the expectation that certain requirements are met at specific intervals during the four years. The most extreme example of this is St. John's College, which has a strictly regimented curriculum that moves through civilizational history and human development over the course of four years. The major benefit of having an ordered curriculum like this is that it simplifies the requirements and allows for a common, shared experience for all students.

It is worth noting that many of the schools in this review have undergone a significant GE curriculum review within the past five to ten years – sometimes for the first time in decades. A particularly important feature of most recent curricular changes is an even greater emphasis on interdisciplinary learning. Perhaps to a greater extent than all other schools reviewed in this list,

¹ Bolded schools have undergone a curriculum review in recent few years, or are currently undergoing a review, and information on those reviews is included in this research.

Duke's new curriculum focuses on interdisciplinary learning. Duke's curricular changes also represented a common theme among many of the schools, which is a desire to simplify, but not necessarily lessen, the GE requirements. It is also worth noting that multiple schools created a cohort of fellows to aid in curriculum changes. UVA created the College Fellows and William and Mary created Faculty Fellows. Both institutions charged their respective Fellows with designing and teaching newly required first-year experience courses that are intentionally interdisciplinary.

BROWN UNIVERSITY

Overview:

Brown University has a student enrollment of about 6,500 undergraduates, with a faculty-student ratio of 9:1. It was again ranked 14th in the nation by *US News and World Report* in 2016. Its undergraduate curriculum is notable for having significantly less academic requirements than many other national universities. In 2008, Brown underwent a review of its educational policies and curriculum. The end result, entitled [*The Curriculum at Forty: A Plan for Strengthening the College Experience at Brown*](#), provided a list of recommendations to strengthen Brown's curriculum (24-26).

Brown's Open Curriculum is based on three principles:

- Students ought to take an active role in their education by assuming responsibility for the direction of their learning.
- An undergraduate education is seen as a process of individual and intellectual development, rather than simply a way to transmit a set body of information.
- The curriculum should encourage individuality, experimentation, and the integration and synthesis of different disciplines.

Curricular Requirements:

- All students must successfully complete at least 30 courses in eight semesters
- Every undergraduate must complete at least one concentration program (often called a "major" at other colleges)
 - There are 79 concentrations to choose from, including an Independent Concentration that is designed by the student (similar to WF's Open Curriculum Program)
- Students must be able to demonstrate excellent skill in written English before they graduate.

The Writing Requirement

- Starting with the class of 2018 all undergraduate students have to work on their writing twice through a two-part process:
 - During semesters 1-4, students must take an approved writing class. The classes span all concentrations and are specially designated WRIT
 - During semesters 5-8, students must either take another writing designated course, or submit a work of writing that meets specific guidelines:
 - 20 pages (approximately 7,000 words), if a single academic essay, or if there are multiple academic essays, at least one essay must be 12 pages

(approximately 4,200 words); the student's original individual work; group projects are not acceptable; and written in English.

- Writing Fellows Courses allow students to work on their writing with a Brown undergraduate, called a Writing Fellow, who has been trained in composition and pedagogy.

Course Offerings:

- First year seminars, second year seminars, and humanities seminars for juniors and seniors.
 - Many sophomore seminars focus specifically on issues of social justice, identity, and difference
- Diverse Perspectives in Liberal Learning courses seek to:
 - Expose and critique the diverse historical and cultural forces that shape the construction of knowledge in all disciplines;
 - Teach the arts of critical reflection: questioning thoughtfully, listening openly, and speaking cogently about differing points of view;
 - Develop responsible citizens by examining the ways that power and privilege affect human lives and providing pathways to meaningful change.

Best Practices:

- Brown's 2008 report *Curriculum at Forty* called for "a full examination of Brown's concentration programs to ensure integrity and consistency across the curriculum" (24). It also recommended establishing clear guidelines and expectations so that each concentration provided a range of programs, including a capstone project and experiential learning.
 - A WF curricular review could benefit from a review of capstone projects and programs for majors, and provide clearer guidelines that provide more consistency across majors.
- Diverse Perspectives in Liberal Learning courses offer a potential model for WF classes on diversity and inclusion.

CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE

Overview:

Similar to Pomona College (also on this list), Claremont McKenna College (CMC) is a small private liberal arts college that is a member of The Claremont Colleges, which share academic classes and adjoining campuses in Claremont, California. Its total enrollment is about 1300 undergraduate students. In 2016, *US News and World Report* ranked it 9th among national liberal arts colleges. While it is primarily an undergraduate college, students do have the option to choose accelerated dual degree programs through the Robert Day School of Economics and Finance. This review, however, will only focus on the general college curriculum.

GE Requirements:

- Departments determine which courses meet the GE requirements in their discipline.
- Students have to get permission to take GE courses outside of CMC (at another Claremont College).

- GE requirements in humanities and social sciences must be met by courses outside a student's major(s).

Freshman Humanities and Writing Program

- Freshman Writing Seminar
 - “The Freshman Writing Seminar, directed by the Department of Literature, aims to enhance the writing skills and literary acumen of first-year students through intensive composition and revision and the study of significant texts and models. Each seminar focuses on a literary theme chosen by the instructor, and each ranges across periods and genres. All of the seminars seek to instill rigor of argument, clarity of presentation, and stylistic grace. Students will be expected to write no fewer than seventy-five hundred words during the semester. Seminars will typically have fifteen students.”
 - This one-semester requirement is met by completing FWS 010 CM - Freshman Writing Seminar, and must be taken during the first year.
 - Students who earn a score of 5 on one of the English Advanced Placement (AP) exams may seek permission from the chair of the literature department to take another CMC literature course numbered 60 or higher to fulfill this requirement. Students who receive approval to substitute another course for FWS may not double count it for any other general education or major requirement.
- Freshman Humanities Seminar
 - “The Freshman Humanities Seminar (FHS) program aims to give first-year students an introduction to some of the questions fundamental to individuals in their relationship to society and the world. Each section engages one or more critical themes such as the notion of the self, the community, individual and communal values, modes of understanding, and creative expression, and the relationships each one has with the others. In doing so, all FHS courses include historically significant texts: texts that have become objects of academic discourse in part because of their enormous impact in non-academic contexts.”
 - Students must complete this course at CMC during the first or second semester in residence at the College.

Humanities

- For the general education requirement in the humanities, all students must complete a designated course in 2 of the following 4 fields of study outside of their major(s):
 - Foreign Literature (The 4th semester of a European or classical language, the 5th semester of Korean or Arabic, or the 6th semester of Chinese or Japanese)
 - Literature (Any CMC literature course numbered 50 or above)
 - Philosophy (Any CMC philosophy course numbered below 60)
 - Religious Studies (Any CMC religious studies course numbered 180 or below)
- Students who major in one or more of these fields must complete courses in 3 of the 4 fields.

Social Sciences

- For the general education requirement in the social sciences, students must complete at least one designated course in 3 of the following 4 fields of study outside of their major(s):
 - Economics (ECON 050 CM Principles of Economic Analysis)
 - Government (GOVT 020 CM Introduction to American Politics)
 - History (Any CMC history course numbered under 170)
 - Psychology (Any CMC psychology course numbered under 100)
- Students majoring in one or more of these fields must complete an appropriate course in each of the 4 fields.

Foreign Language Requirement

- “This requirement is met by passing the third college semester of a foreign language. The foreign language requirement can also be completed by earning a score of 4 or 5 on the Advanced Placement (AP) examination or a score of 6 or 7 on a Higher Level International Baccalaureate (IB) examination in a foreign language. Students who earn a score of 650 or higher on a College Board SAT Subject Test in French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Latin, or Spanish will also have completed the foreign language requirement. Students cannot complete the foreign literature requirement through tests or competency.”
- [See additional exemptions](#)

Mathematics/Computer Science

- Any course offered by the CMC Department of Mathematical Sciences may satisfy the general education requirement. Students may take a pre-calculus course either in Claremont or off-campus for credit towards graduation but not for the general education requirement in mathematics. All new students will have the opportunity to attend a mathematics and computer science information session prior to registration in the fall.

Science

- Every CMC student must complete one laboratory science course offered by Keck Science Department or elsewhere within The Claremont Consortium by the end of the second year at CMC.

Physical Education

- The College requires all students to complete three semesters of physical education. Two seasons of participation in a team or club sport will also fulfill the physical education requirement. All students are expected to complete this requirement during their first two years, except for those excused by the Chair of the Department of Physical Education for medical reasons or because of prior military service.

Senior Thesis

“The senior thesis should serve as a capstone experience to a student’s undergraduate education. Students must complete a senior thesis in at least one of their majors, under supervision of a faculty reader who teaches within that major, unless granted a special exception. CMC students with an off-campus major may register for a senior thesis in that major under the appropriate course number at the major’s sponsoring college. CMC students may use this thesis

in lieu of the senior thesis at CMC. If the off-campus major does not offer a senior thesis under its own course number, students must register for the senior thesis at CMC. Students who have a CMC major and an off-campus major may choose to complete the senior thesis in one or both majors. Students who wish to do a 2-semester, 2-credit project register for a senior research course in the first semester and for senior thesis in the second semester. Neither the senior thesis nor the research course may be counted as a course for the major.”

COLLEGE OF WILLIAM AND MARY

Overview:

Founded in 1693, the College of William and Mary is the second oldest college in the U.S. In 2016, W&M was ranked 34th by *US News and World Report*, and is recognized as one of eight “Public Ivies.” W&M has a relatively small undergraduate size for a public university, with just over 6,300 students. W&M recently established a new GE curriculum for the college. As of August 2015, W&M’s curriculum is called “COLL,” for College Curriculum. Students in the class of 2019 were the first to study the new curriculum. The old and new GE curricula are detailed below.

Course Specific Requirements

Foreign Language Proficiency Requirement

- Students have to take up to the 202 level of a foreign language, which is generally equivalent to four semesters of a language (Elementary I and II, and Intermediate I and II).
- There are many ways to be exempted from the requirement. They are listed on the site linked above.

Writing Proficiency (Altered with the new COLL Curriculum)

- All students must satisfactorily complete with a grade of C- or better, normally by the end of their first year at the College, a one-semester course with the C150 (College 150) attribute.
- All students must satisfy the Major Writing Requirement described by each department, program, or school. Students must satisfy the lower division writing proficiency requirement before attempting the Major Writing Requirement.

Major Computing Requirement

- All students in the Classes of 2017 and 2018 must satisfy a Major Computing Requirement. Each department and program or school has described how the Major Computing Requirement is fulfilled.
- This requirement is altered starting with the new COLL Curriculum. It will be met by one of the new required courses.

Curriculum Requirements

General Education Requirements (Ends with the Class of 2018)

“GER courses must be either three or four credit courses, except for courses used to fulfill GER 6, which can be one, two, three, or four-credit courses. A single course may fulfill, at most, two GERs and may also be used to fulfill major, minor, and/or proficiency requirements.

Courses used to satisfy GERs may not be taken Pass/Fail except for those courses designated by the College as Pass/Fail courses, such as physical activity courses in the Department of Kinesiology. Unlike the COLL curriculum, students may satisfy one or more of the GERs by receiving credit for a GER course through Advanced Placement (AP) or International Baccalaureate (IB) test scores, or by receiving transfer credit if the course is taken prior to enrolling at the College.”

- **GER 1 Mathematics and Quantitative Reasoning** (one course)
- **GER 2 Natural Sciences** (two courses, one of which is taken with its associated laboratory)
 - 2A Physical Sciences (one course)
 - 2B Biological Sciences (one course)
- **GER 3 Social Sciences** (two courses)
- **GER 4 World Cultures and History**
 - One course in category A, one course in category B and one additional course in either category A, B or C:
 - 4A History and Culture in the European Tradition
 - 4B History and Culture outside the European Tradition
 - 4C Cross-Cultural Issues
- **GER 5 Literature and History of the Arts** (one course)
- **GER 6 Creative and Performing Arts**
 - Many GER 6 courses are two or three-credit courses. In the case where one-credit courses are used to satisfy this requirement, the courses must be in the same performance medium.
- **GER 7 Philosophical, Religious and Social Thought** (one course)

The New COLL Curriculum (Beginning with Class of 2019)

The existing GE requirements had not been revised since a review in 1993. A year-long process brought about the new College Curriculum (COLL) in 2013. By Virginia state law, GE requirements must account for about 25% of the minimum 120 hours needed for an undergraduate degree. “By design, the new general education curriculum extends across all four undergraduate years, with each year building toward an integrated liberal arts education. The new curriculum emphasizes inquiry (how to frame questions, reason, create, solve problems) and writing and other forms of communication throughout all four years” ([“W&M faculty approve new general education curriculum”](#)).

Overlap in requirements. A single course may fulfill only one COLL requirement (COLL 100, COLL 150, COLL 200, COLL 300, or COLL 400); a course may fulfill one COLL and a proficiency. A maximum of three courses may be counted toward the COLL requirements and toward the major.

COLL 100 (One course, four credits)

- These courses are devoted to “big ideas:” significant questions and concepts, beliefs and creative visions, theories and discoveries that have shaped our understanding of the world. COLL 100 courses introduce students to the College’s library and other academic

resources, and to the ways in which information is accessed, evaluated, and communicated.

- All COLL 100s fulfill the state-mandated digital information literacy requirement.

COLL 150 (One course, four credits)

- These courses are seminars, typically limited to an enrollment of fifteen, which explore deeply a particular topic via close readings of texts, data, or methods of inquiry. The goal of COLL 150 is to initiate students into the culture of critical thinking, persuasive writing, and independent inquiry that is at the core of the undergraduate program. COLL 150 seminars highlight student discussion.
- Students must receive a C- or better in COLL 150 for the course to apply to the degree.

COLL 200

- A total of 12 COLL 200 credits are required, with at least one course anchored in each of the three following knowledge domains:
 - Arts, Letters, and Values (ALV)
 - Cultures, Societies, and Individuals (CSI)
 - Natural and Quantitative Reasoning (NQR)
- At least one COLL 200 course must be taken in the second year.
- Each COLL 200 course significantly enhances student knowledge of a specific topic and also calls upon students to think about how its discipline fits into the broader framework of the Liberal Arts. Thus, each course emphasizes ideas and methods central to its domain(s) while also looking outward to one or both of the other domains. To the extent possible, COLL 200 courses also give students the opportunity to put methodologies represented in the course into practice.
- **Additional credits in the Knowledge Domains:** General education also requires undergraduates to take at least six more credits in the three knowledge domains of ALV, CSI, and NQR, with at least two credits in each domain.

COLL 300 (Typically one three-credit course)

- Typically takes place in year three.
- COLL 300 joins students with people, places, and ideas that lift them out of their familiar surroundings and deepen the way they see themselves in the world. COLL 300 asks students to use their knowledge, their emerging expertise in framing questions, and their communication skills to engage the world in a self-reflective, cross-cultural way.

COLL 400 (At least three credits)

- A capstone experience which typically takes place in year 4, in the student's chosen major.

Best Practices:

- Like some other schools in this review, W&M emphasized the importance of a curriculum that progressed over the course of four years. Courses build on courses and themes from the year before.
- W&M also simplified the subcategories for its requirements by reducing the number of subcategories from seven to three. The three new categories are newly named knowledge domains.

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE

Overview:

Dartmouth is one of the oldest colleges in the country, and is a part of the Ivy League. *US News and World Report* ranked it 11th among national universities in 2016. Classes are taught on a quarterly system with Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer terms. In addition to the liberal arts education provided by the College of Arts and Sciences, Dartmouth also has graduate programs in the Geisel School of Medicine, the School of Graduate and Advanced Studies, Thayer School of Engineering, and the Tuck School of Business. The undergraduate college has an enrollment size of about 4,200 students. The College of Arts & Sciences consist of 40 academic departments and programs. The top majors among 2014 graduates were economics, government, psychology, neuroscience, history, biological sciences, engineering sciences, English, and mathematics. Dartmouth's faculty voted to change the curriculum to its current form in 1991, and the new curriculum began in 1994 ([Vaitayanonta](#)). More than 20 years later, in May 2016, Dartmouth faculty again voted to simplify the current curriculum ([Brace](#)).

Education Requirements:

Students must complete 35 courses over four years. A student must be in residence for all three terms of the first year, for the summer term following the sophomore year, and for the fall, winter, and spring terms of the senior year

Writing Requirement

- Students can fulfill the First Year writing requirement by taking one of the following courses/sequences:
 - [Writing 2-3](#)
 - [Writing 5](#)
 - [Humanities 1-2](#)

First-Year Seminar

- Following the Writing course, each student must take one FYS.
- These seminars are designed both to further the student's proficiency in writing and to provide an opportunity for participation in small group study and discussions with an instructor on a subject of mutual interest.
- This requirement must be completed during the first year.
- A First-Year Seminar may satisfy a distributive or world culture requirement if so indicated on the College website.
- It is never possible to include a First-Year Seminar as an actual part of a major.

Language Requirement

- Students must complete the language requirement by the end of their 7th term on campus (that is, during junior year).
- The language requirement is completion through level 3 of a language.
- Some languages (Greek, Latin, Portuguese) can be done in two terms.

General Education Requirements

- World Culture Requirement

- Each student must take and pass one course in each of three areas: Western Cultures, Non-Western Cultures, and Culture and Identity
- Distributive Requirement (Ten courses total)
 - Arts (1)
 - Literature (1)
 - Systems and Traditions of Thought, Meaning, and Value (1)
 - International or Comparative Study (1)
 - Social Analysis (2)
 - Quantitative and Deductive Sciences (1)
 - Natural Sciences (2)
 - One of the courses in this category must have a laboratory, field, or experimental component.
 - Technology or Applied Science (1)
- A course may satisfy categories in two of these requirements. For example, a course might satisfy the Western category in the World Culture requirement and the Literature category in the Distributive requirement.

Physical Education Requirement

- All undergraduate students must earn three credits (i.e., courses) in physical education and complete a 50-yard swim requirement
- Credits may be earned by successfully completing activity courses, wellness-oriented non-activity courses, and participation in intercollegiate and club programs.

Major Requirements

- In addition to Standard Departmental Majors and Program majors, students can have a Modified Major or a Special Major. “A Modified Major usually comprises work in two departments or programs with emphasis in one. The Special Major exists to accommodate students who wish to design special interdisciplinary or interdivisional programs of study. It is also possible for a student to have combinations of majors and minors; however, a student cannot exceed two additional majors or minors beyond the required major (for a total of three).
- No more than half of courses required for the major, including prerequisites, may be satisfied by transfer.”

Changes to the Current Curriculum:

- Information on the approved changes can be found in a May 2016 [article](#) by Carter Brace in *The Dartmouth*, and in a [report](#) by the Curriculum Review Committee (CRC)
- On page 3 of the Final Report, the CRC provides six recommendations that were ultimately approved by the faculty:
 - Strengthen Dartmouth’s intellectual environment, by reinforcing the rigor of a Dartmouth undergraduate education and assuring that undergraduate social and residential life complement Dartmouth’s academic mission.
 - Improve academic advising, particularly in the sophomore year, to assure that students value both the breadth and depth of their liberal arts education.
 - Simplify distributive requirements, to encourage students to take greater ownership over the breadth component of their liberal arts education.

- Emphasize the importance of undergraduate research across all majors, thereby encouraging students to take full advantage of Dartmouth's commitment to a scholar-teacher model.
- Revise the weekly class schedule in recognition of a more dispersed campus and to open new learning opportunities for faculty members and students.
- Embrace technological opportunities that reinforce Dartmouth's core mission and its commitment to close student-faculty interaction.

Simplifying the Distributional Requirements

- Currently, there are ten courses within the distributional requirements, and they are broken up among eight different categories (see above). Under the new curriculum, students will still be required to complete ten distributional courses, but these courses will be divided among four categories, or "Inquiries." This allows students more freedom within each of the different modes of inquiry.
- The ten courses in the distributional requirements will now be divided among the following different modes of inquiry:
 - Humanistic and Aesthetic Inquiry (three courses)
 - To fulfill this distributive requirement, each student must complete satisfactorily at least one course in critical analysis and one course in production.
 - Natural Scientific Inquiry (three courses)
 - To fulfill this distributive requirement, each student must complete satisfactorily at least one course with a sustained laboratory or field work component.
 - Social Scientific Inquiry (three courses)
 - Interdisciplinary Inquiry (one course)
- Other than the critical analysis and production requirements (under the Humanistic and Aesthetic Inquiry), and the lab requirement (under the Natural Scientific Inquiry) there are no requirements for students to take certain subcategories of classes under the new inquiries. The CRC members felt that this would allow for a more personalized approach to distributional courses.
- Criticism:
 - In a May 2016 [article](#) from *The Dartmouth* entitled "Faculty Approves Future Changes to Curriculum Requirements," some faculty members argued that the lack of additional requirements under the Distributional Requirements would decrease the number of students taking certain courses. For example, one faculty member said that removing the distinction between natural and applied sciences would negatively impact the applied sciences, and that students often are not exposed to applied sciences in high school.

Reducing the World Cultures Requirement

See pages 15-16 in [The Curriculum Review Committee Final Report](#)

- "Some members of the curriculum committee felt the concerns of culture and identity were by now sufficiently infused within the curriculum such that a mandatory three-course requirement was no longer warranted."
- "Others argued that the 'western-non-Western' distinction had become anachronistic."

- “Some committee members questioned the practical utility of Dartmouth’s ‘culture and identity’ category, pointing out that neither faculty members nor students had a clear sense of what in particular the roughly 250 courses assigned the designation had in common and were intended to accomplish.”
- The committee recommended reducing the “world culture” requirement to one course, instead of three. Students would pick this course from among roughly 40 courses, rather than about 250 (as under the current curriculum).
 - “Each of these courses should be designed to help students engage and understand a world of differences, whether they be about culture, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, religion, or sexual orientation.”

Addition of a “Reflective Document” Requirement

See pages 14-15 of the CRC Final Report (linked above)

- “The reflective document is a short statement, ideally one to two pages, written by each student at the beginning of sophomore summer. It should explain how the distributive courses completed (and the remainder to be chosen) fulfill the breadth part of the student’s liberal arts education. Students should reflect on how their chosen distributive courses fit together, for example, by articulating common intellectual or conceptual themes that cut across their selected courses. The document should also include a rationale for the ‘depth’ part of each student’s planned course of study, e.g., an intellectual explanation for the student’s choice of major. The document is intended to serve as a reflective bridge between the first half and second half of a student’s time at Dartmouth, and between the initial, exploratory phase of liberal arts education and the subsequent pursuit of disciplinary depth within a department or program.”
- Reviewed and approved by pre-major and departmental advisors.

Changing the Language Requirement

- The Curriculum Review Committee’s “Final Report” called for strengthening the language requirement so that *all* students have to take a non-English language course at at least the level of third semester.
- But, according to a May 2016 article in *The Dartmouth*, “The faculty so overwhelmingly opposed the new language requirement that the meeting’s organizers did not bother to count all those voting against the proposal. Multiple professors objected that the policy would force students fluent in foreign languages not offered by the College to take courses to level three in a language at the College despite their foreign language proficiency” ([Brace 2016](#)).

Noteworthy Best Practices:

- Dartmouth’s Curriculum Review Committee noted the vast number of courses that meet the “world culture,” and the lack of clarity around how and why these courses focus on diversity. The committee’s recommendation to narrow these courses to about 40, and require only one, demonstrates better why the requirement exists in the first place.

DAVIDSON COLLEGE

Overview:

Davidson College is a small, private liberal arts college located in Davidson, NC. It has a total undergraduate enrollment of about 1,950 students. It consistently ranks among the top national liberal arts colleges. *US News and World Report* ranked it 9th in that category in 2016. Davidson offers 26 majors and 17 minors, and 17 interdisciplinary minors. It has a student-to-faculty ratio of 10:1, and more than 70% of classes have less than 20 students.

Distribution Requirements:

Students must take eight courses, one in each of the following categories:

- Historical Thought
 - Courses that seek to understand past human societies and how those societies have evolved over time. Examining documents and/or artifacts to construct broad narratives about the past and how human societies evolved; these courses reveal the constructed ways in which we understand the past and suggest the contingency of how we understand the present.
- Literary Studies, Creative Writing and Rhetoric
 - Courses that develop skills for creating and analyzing the complexities of language, form, and aesthetics through which speakers and writers represent the world or express their ideas about it. These courses explore written and oral forms of expression that invite creative interpretation.
- Mathematical and Quantitative Thought
 - Courses that study mathematical, programming, or statistical concepts. Some of these courses instruct students in making and analyzing numerically based claims about reality; others develop knowledge based on mathematical proof and problem-solving.
- Natural Science
 - Laboratory courses that study the natural and physical world through direct observation, experimentation, and/or analysis of empirical evidence. In these courses, students encounter concepts and models and test them against measurements of natural and physical processes, differentiating knowledge based on testable explanations of phenomena from other kinds of knowledge.
- Philosophical And Religious Perspectives
 - Courses on fundamental questions, philosophical reasoning, and religious thought and practices reflect on questions about knowledge, existence or the social and ethical world; reasoning about the derivation of positions, beliefs or values; or practices forming individual or community identity.
- Social-Scientific Thought
 - Courses that employ systematic analysis of qualitative, quantitative and/or ethnographic information drawn from the human world. These courses develop, test, and explain concepts and theories about human behavior, either individual or collective and differentiate knowledge derived from observations of the human world from other sorts of knowledge.
- Visual and Performing Arts
 - Courses that teach students to represent or express ideas or formulate arguments about how the world is represented in music, theatre, visual art, dance, and screen

media. These courses help students build conceptual vocabularies for interpreting and communicating ideas about such works and the formal and aesthetic concerns related to them and/or understand how others have interpreted and communicated these ideas in historical contexts.

- Liberal Studies
 - Introductory courses accessible to first- or second-year students without prior background in the field that do not fall neatly into one of the seven categories listed above.

Additional Notes

- AP and IB courses can meet Distribution Requirements
- “No more than two credits attained prior to matriculation at Davidson (or, for transfer students, as a degree candidate at another college) may be applied to the satisfaction of distribution requirements.”
- Courses in the writing program (WRI 101) do not fulfill distribution requirements.
- [Humanities Program](#)
 - Offered to freshmen only.
 - Students who complete the two semester course will complete two distribution requirements AND the writing requirement.

[Writing Requirement](#)

- Must be completed at Davidson; it cannot be met by AP/IB courses.
- The requirement must be met before sophomore year.
- Two options: Writing 101 or the Humanities Program course series.
 - For info on the Humanities Program, see above under “Additional Notes” in the Distribution Requirement.

[Cultural Diversity Requirement](#)

“Davidson College believes that all students should have the experience of studying societies or cultures that differ from the majority cultures of the United States or Europe. Before graduation, each student must complete an approved course dealing with one or more such cultures. At the beginning of each department or program section in the catalog is a list of courses meeting that requirement. Many courses may also satisfy a distribution, major, or minor requirement.”

[Foreign Language Requirement:](#)

There are multiple ways to meet the FL requirement:

- Complete a language at the third course level at Davidson.
- Transfer work from another college at a suitable level (often Intermediate II).
- Receive AP/IB credit for a language.
- Complete a placement test that shows competency at the level of the third semester of a language, or higher.
- Satisfactorily document that English is not the student’s native language.

[Physical Education Requirement](#)

- [Davidson 101](#), required of all students, including transfers, during their first semester at Davidson. The Curriculum is as follows:
 - Alcohol Education (Web based)
 - Career and Life Planning (1 hour)
 - Diversity (1 hour)
 - Human Sexuality (1 hour)
 - Library Information (Web based)
 - Psychological Health Issues and Resources (1 hour)
 - Realizing Your Risk (1 hour)
- Two (2) Lifetime Activity credits (courses numbered PE 2xx, 3xx, and 5xx;)
- One team sport credit (PE 4xx).

DUKE UNIVERSITY

Overview:

Duke University has about 6,600 undergraduate students, with roughly the same number of graduate students. It is consistently ranked among the top universities in the country, with *US News and World Report* ranking it 8th in 2016. Duke is one of the top research institutions in the world, ranking 5th in the country in research funding. Duke's undergraduate schools include the Trinity College of Arts and Sciences and the Pratt School of Engineering; but this research focuses only on the College of Arts and Sciences. Duke's Trinity College is in the process of undergoing a curriculum review, and the information is included in this review.

Educational Philosophy:

“Duke embraces openness in the pursuit of knowledge and welcomes intellectually restless students who use their talents to put ideas to the test. We view education not only as a gateway to personal development, but also as a pathway for improving society.” It identifies four components of its educational philosophy:

Self-Defined Academic Pursuits

- Offers “[Program II](#),” which is a self-disciplined program where students create their own curriculum and academic plan.

Interdisciplinary Education

In addition to other interdisciplinary initiatives, Duke offers an [Interdepartmental Major](#) (IDM):

- Similar to the WF Interdisciplinary Major
- Students design a major that draws equally from two different departments. This is different from Program II.
- It must be planned early in the student's undergraduate career – in no case will an IDM be approved in the senior year. An IDM must meet the following requirements:
 - The major must consist of 14 or more courses.
 - At least ten of the courses must be at the 200-level or above.
 - The courses must be split evenly between the two departments.
 - At least four of the seven courses required by each department must be taught within the department.

- All courses must be among those normally accepted for a major in the two departments.
- While one of the departments must be identified as the department primarily responsible for the advising for the student's major program, the student must have an advisor in both departments.
- The Directors of Undergraduate Studies must agree to an initial list of courses that the student will take in the two departments and must jointly approve any subsequent changes to the course of study.

Civic and Global Engagement

- “Through programs such as the [Hart Leadership Program](#), which combines academic course work, experiential learning and close mentoring from faculty, and the [Service Learning Program](#), which links students' innovative ideas with opportunities for community service, we support both our students and the greater good.”

Undergraduate Research

- The [Undergraduate Research Support Office](#) identifies grants and assistantships for undergraduate research projects and institutions that offer summer research programs. It also holds symposia on undergraduate research during the academic year. In addition, Duke's many science laboratories provide a stimulating setting for undergraduate research, giving students a strong foundation to pursue research careers well past their undergraduate years.
- **Duke has recently increased its focus on research in the areas of the humanities and social sciences.**

General Education Requirements:

The [Curriculum Philosophy page](#) provides a lot of information on how and why the curriculum is broken down into unique ways.

Program I

- A total of at least 34.0 course credits
- Two courses in each of five [Areas of Knowledge](#) (Arts, Literatures, and Performance; Civilizations; Natural Sciences; Quantitative Studies; and)Social Sciences
- Two courses in each of the following four Modes of Inquiry: Cross-Cultural Inquiry, Ethical Inquiry, Research, and Science, Technology, and Society
- In the other two Modes of Inquiry: Three courses in Writing (includes Writing 101, below) and one to three courses in Foreign Language, depending on level of proficiency.
 - [Writing 101 in the first year](#)
 - [One seminar \(coded “S”\) in the first year](#)
 - [Two Small-Group Learning Experiences](#) (seminars, tutorials, thesis course, or independent study) completed after the first year of enrollment
- One major

The Writing Requirement

- [The Thompson Writing Center](#) is one of the best writing centers in the country.
- All students are required to take Writing 101, as well as two Writing in the Disciplines (WID) courses.

- WID courses are major/program courses specifically designated to incorporate the teaching of writing in particular disciplines.

Program II

- A total of at least 34.0 course credits
- General education requirements – generally the same as those of Program I but can be modified so long as breadth is maintained
- Writing 101 in the first year
- One seminar (coded “S”) in the first year
- Specific requirements of the approved Program II, which include 15-18 courses, including two Senior Capstone Project courses.

Curriculum Changes

- In 2014, Duke’s Trinity College of A&S decided to undergo a three-year curricular process review. Duke’s curriculum had not been reviewed and changed since the late 1990s.
 - A November 2014 [article](#) in *Duke Today* noted the overly-complex and confusing nature of Duke’s current curriculum: “The intellectual rationale – although sound – is not broadly understood. Advisers, faculty, students don’t get it, and it’s hard for them to articulate the purpose behind it. Michael Hardt [literature professor on the curriculum committee] told me that if the only thing that happens in this process is that people understand how and why this works, and what we’re doing here, that would be good.”
 - Another *Duke Today* article ([“Arts and Sciences Starts Three-Year Review of Undergraduate Curriculum”](#)) notes the following goals for the curricular review:
 - Clarify and simplify the logic of the curriculum;
 - Create more opportunities for exploration and creativity in the curriculum;
 - Rethink Duke’s vision of disciplinary education.
 - “As part of the committee’s vision for the curriculum... there has been some consensus that a Duke should provide a true liberal arts education with robust disciplinary majors as a centerpiece.”
- Updates from the most recent (January 2016) *Duke Today* [article](#):
 - “One building block of the idea is a multidisciplinary team-taught university course called **The Duke Experience**, which would allow all first-year students to begin their Duke educations with a common educational experience.”
 - All first-year students will take one common 10-month flipped-taught course, led by five faculty members across different fields and beginning in the summer prior to students’ official enrollment. The course topic – some possibilities are Mind and Body, Climate Change, Race and Inequality – will rotate every three to five years.
 - “**Major and Depth in a Different Field:** While interdisciplinary study is a signature of a Duke education, Shanahan said the disciplines remain the foundation of scholarly study. All students will be required to have a major, but in addition, they will have to show depth of study in a different field, either through a double major, a certificate, a minor or a self-designed sequence.”

- Currently 83% of Duke undergraduates complete study in a second field. Duke wants to make that number 100%.
- **Mentored Scholarly Experience:** The new proposal would require all students to complete some kind of mentored project by the end of their senior year; i.e., some sort of capstone, thesis, mentored lab work, etc.

Noteworthy Best Practices:

- Duke's emphasis on understanding "civilizations" is an interesting way of conceptualizing diversity and difference. It could be used as a way of organizing cultural diversity requirements.
- Duke has invested heavily in interdisciplinary teaching. The current curricular review is likely to propose a requirement that all students complete studies in a major/minor/program other than their primary major.
- Their ongoing curricular review aims to significantly simplify a confusing system of curricular GE requirements.

EMORY UNIVERSITY

Overview:

Emory university is a private research university in Atlanta, Georgia with a total student population of 14,500 and an undergraduate student enrollment of about 7,800. In 2016, *US News and World Report* ranked Emory 20th in the nation. Emory is distinct on this list because its undergraduate education is divided between [Emory College](#) and [Oxford College](#) (at the original campus located in Oxford, Georgia). Students apply separately to the two colleges. Students at the Oxford College spend their first two years at the Oxford campus and then move to Emory's main campus in Atlanta for their junior and senior years. Oxford College is significantly smaller, with only about 950 students total for the freshman and sophomore classes. Their respective curricula are different, and therefore both are reviewed here. Emory's Oxford College has undergone two curriculum reviews in the past decade, both of which are discussed below.

Emory College: General Education Requirements

"The general education component of an Emory undergraduate education is organized to present an array of intellectual approaches and perspectives as ways of learning rather than a prescribed body of content. Its purposes are to develop students' competencies in the skills and methods of writing, quantitative methods, a second language, and physical education; to acquaint students with methodologies that characterize the humanities, the social sciences, and the natural sciences as the three broad divisions of learning in the arts and sciences; to deepen students' perspectives on national, regional, and global history and culture, and to give every student some exposure to an interactive seminar experience. These purposes are met by a student's choosing from a range of individual courses within a clearly defined framework." There are a total of 17 courses required; however, three of these are only one-hour courses.

Area 1: First-Year Seminar Classes (one course)

- "Designed to engage students in various aspects of inquiry and research with close guidance of a faculty member."

- “Requirements: One course. Must be completed in first two semesters. Any course that satisfies the First-Year Seminar Class requirement may not satisfy another general education requirement. This requirement is exempted for Oxford Continuees”

Area 2: First-Year Writing Requirement (one course)

- “These courses work at refining a student’s fundamental writing skills through practice either in expository prose discourse or written analysis and interpretation of works of literature... Must be completed in first two semesters.”
- Students can choose one of three courses to complete this requirement: CPLT 110: Intro to Literary Studies, ENG 101: Expository Writing, ENG 181: Writing About Literature.

Area 3: Continuing Writing Courses (three courses)

- Students choose three courses across the disciplines and departments that are listed as having a writing-intensive component. “The goal of writing-intensive courses is to improve writing skills through writing regularly in a context where mentors in the various communities of discourse encourage, guide, and communicate to students high standards of writing through instruction and example. Writing intensive classes focus not only on the product, but also on the process of writing.”
- Requirement: Three courses. Must be taken at Emory College of Arts and Sciences or Oxford College of Emory University. Must earn a grade of C or better.

Area 4: Math & Quantitative Reasoning (MQR) Courses (one course)

- “These courses expand a student's understanding of quantitative modes of analysis.” Courses can be taken in many departments such as political science, economics, and other social sciences; not just math and statistics.

Area 5: Science, Nature, Technology (SNT) Courses (two courses, one of which has a lab)

- “These courses demonstrate fundamental principles and techniques of scientific inquiry as a means of understanding the natural world and human life. This category includes both courses focusing on scientific findings and concepts, and courses focusing on scientific methodology.”

Area 6: History, Society, Cultures (HSC) Courses (two courses)

- “These include courses that focus on individuals and/or groups in society; courses that demonstrate how the social sciences use theory and methods to expand our understanding of social phenomena; courses that examine historical forces, cultural traditions, and human values; and related interdisciplinary courses.”

Area 7: Humanities, Arts, Performance/Language (HAP/HAL) Courses (four courses)

- **HAP**
 - “This category includes courses that reflect on human experience and the human condition; courses that reflect on the texts or artistic forms; courses in performance of art, dance, music, or theater; and related interdisciplinary courses.”
 - “Requirement: Four courses. Must include 2 sequential courses in a single foreign language wherein the language of instruction is not English, with possible

exemption of 1 course by AP credit. Each student must pursue study of a language other than the student's native language.”

- **HAL**
 - Students must earn credit for two sequential HAL courses in a single foreign language. Each student must pursue study of a language other than the student's native language. Students may satisfy the remaining two course requirements by taking any two HAP courses, any two additional HAL courses (where one of the HAL courses is beyond the elementary level (200 level or above)), or one HAP and one HAL course.

Area 8: Personal Health (HTH) Courses (one course)

- One one-hour course. This requirement is exempted for Oxford Continuees

Area 9: Physical Education and Dance (PED) Courses (two courses)

- These courses promote a knowledge and experience of physical and emotional health, bodily movement, individual and team sports, and various recreational activities as integral to the education of the whole person.
- Requirement: Two one-hour courses, one of which must be a Principles of Physical Fitness (PPF) course. PED courses are allowed to be taken on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis to satisfy this requirement.

Oxford College: Curriculum Requirements

- Students at the Oxford College Receive an Associate of Arts Degree before automatically continuing on to the main college campus at Emory University to receive their Bachelor’s Degree.
- Students at the Oxford College follow the same [distribution requirements](#) as Emory College (above); however, they only have to complete three of the five areas, plus physical education. Students must also take at least one course in each of the following areas: SNT (w/lab), HSC and HAP.
- In addition, Oxford students must complete a minimum of three [Ways of Inquiry \(INQ\)](#) courses, representing any two of the five different academic areas.
 - “INQ courses are designed to be both informative and transformative. Students not only learn the fundamental concepts, principles, assumptions, and terminology of a particular discipline, but they also learn to understand and question the ways in which knowledge is pursued.”
- The [GE Program](#) at Oxford College consists of a first year writing requirement and a continuing writing requirement.
 - Students must satisfactorily complete English 185 during the first year of their enrollment at Oxford College. Entering students may be placed into English 184, in which case they must complete the first-year writing requirement by taking English 185 in the semester immediately following successful completion of English 184.
 - However, students can exempt this requirement with AP/IB/transfer credit
 - Following completion of English 185, students must fulfil the continuing writing requirement by attaining a grade of C or higher in a “writing rich course.”

Oxford College Curriculum Reform

2008 Reforms

In 2008 Emory's Oxford College reviewed its curriculum, and in 2009 it enacted several changes. It reformed its curriculum by reducing the number of required courses in an effort to simplify its curriculum, which is a stated goal of its general education plan (Powers). The revised curriculum reduced the number of required credits from 76 credit hours to 48. Under the former curriculum requirements, students were allowed to "double dip" by taking classes that completed multiple requirements; however, under the 2008 revised curriculum, students are generally no longer able to count one class for different classes. This is because many members of the curriculum task force felt that students were filling certain courses to fill requirements – not because they wanted to take those courses (Powers).

Previously, students had been required to take two courses in the Division of Social Sciences, as well as two courses in the humanities. However, the new categories in the 2008 revision are more broadly defined, including new groups like "History, Society, Cultures" and "Humanities, Arts, Performance." Some faculty were concerned by the removal of a requirement that students take courses from a list of three different history categories: "United States history, Western history and culture other than the U.S., and non-Western cultures or comparative and international studies" (Powers). However, under the new requirements, students only have to complete two courses from the "History, Society, Culture" area. Some faculty were concerned that students' exposure to important topic areas was being undermined by a call for simplicity within the curriculum.

2015 Reforms

The "Strategic Plan: 2016-2012" lists several initiatives for curriculum reform at Emory's Oxford College. They are listed below, but more information can be found in the PDF document. There are also notes from a town hall discussion and a PDF of the Final Report of the Educational Program Enhancement Working Group.

Initiative 1

Review curricular offerings and identify strengths and needs regarding general education and offerings towards majors and pre-professional tracks. As recommended by EPEWG, a "curricular gap" committee could be formed to undertake this task. This group would also take into account the findings of the Students for a More Inclusive Curriculum Committee.

Initiative 2

Explore the creation of a coherent core curriculum to provide shared learning and cumulative intellectual development for all Oxford students. A group will be created and formally charged to investigate a curricular enhancement and/or redesign, taking into account feedback already received regarding this initiative and its implementation. The following reports will be used as resources during this investigative process: Educational Program Enhancement Working Group Report of July 2015, Students for a More Inclusive Curriculum Report of May 2016, Writing External Review Report of April.

Initiative 3

Students' understanding of how knowledge is defined and created in several disciplines and their production of original research from conceptualization to reporting will be a defining theme of the Oxford educational program. This initiative would most likely incorporate/be an expansion of the current INQ curriculum.

Initiative 4

Oxford will seek to significantly expand opportunities for creative and artistic production on the part of its students to more fully realize the promise of providing a true and robust liberal-arts education.

Initiative 5

Continue to expand the incorporation of the Oxford College Organic Farm into the curriculum. The organic farm is an especially valuable resource for both food production and educational program development. Now that it has become well established, the possibilities for integrating it with educational programs are legion.

Initiative 6

Refine and expand assessment efforts to ensure the quality of programs.

Supporting Documents:

EPEWG. "Final Report: Oxford College Educational Program Enhancement Working Group." *Emory Oxford College*. May 2015.

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Powers, Elia. "Emory's Gen Ed Changes." *Inside Higher Ed*. April 23, 2008.

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Strategic Planning Committee. "Strategic Plan 2016-2021." *Emory Oxford College*.

<http://oxford.emory.edu/a-distinctive-place/strategic-planning/oxford-college-strategic-plan-2016-2021/>

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Overview:

Georgetown University is a private Jesuit university with a total undergraduate enrollment of about 7,600. While made up of many different schools, Georgetown College is the largest, with an undergraduate enrollment of about 3,800 students. *US News and World Report* ranked it 20th in the nation in 2016. For the purposes of this study, Georgetown is notable for its unique "First Year Options" feature that allows all entering first-year students to select from four different seminar options that are distinct topically and structurally.

First Year Options:

- A PDF brochure of the different first year options can be found [here](#). Brief descriptions of the options are excerpted from the brochure below

Option 1: Liberal Arts Seminar (LAS)

- “The Liberal Arts Seminar is a yearlong multidisciplinary course exploring empires in history, especially Mediterranean empires such as Rome, and the empires of the New World. This shared intellectual experience of cooperative learning builds a strong sense of community for student and faculty participants.”
- The program fulfills four core requirements: two in theology, one in writing and one in history.

Option 2: Ignatius Seminars (IS)

- “Offered only in the first semester, Ignatius Seminars introduce students to the depth and diversity of Georgetown’s dynamic intellectual community. Favorite topics of College faculty form the offerings for these seminars that invite small student groups to join their professors in the creative exploration of mind and spirit.”
- Students will take one course during their fall semester only and will receive three credits. The seminar counts as one elective course toward graduation.

Option 3: FLL Hager Scholars Program

- “The new FLL Hager Scholars program is designed with our most ambitious students of languages and linguistics in mind, and is designed to create for them both a sense of community and opportunities for intellectual growth. Over the course of this yearlong program, Hager Scholars will gain a greater appreciation of the possibilities available to students and scholars of language(s), inside the classroom and in the world beyond.”
- Hager Scholars take a series of courses that fulfill core requirements in other disciplines, taught by faculty who are particularly interested in the ways that language study informs their fields.

Option 4: Traditional First-Year Academic Program

- “The majority of first-year students in the College will pursue this option. This summer, you will have the opportunity to construct your class schedule from the full College curriculum, which offers many comprehensive, engaging, and intensive courses. Most students begin with courses from the core requirements as well as elective courses that act as springboards to possible majors.”

Core Requirements:

- The Core is ordinarily completed in the student’s first and second years.
- Students are expected to fulfill Core requirements at Georgetown but may fulfill a maximum of one half of each requirement away from Georgetown with permission from the Dean’s office. Certain specific courses, noted below, must be completed at Georgetown.

Philosophy (2 courses)

- All students in Georgetown College must take two courses in philosophy, one in ethics and one in an area of general philosophy.
- No course at the 200-level or above may be used to fulfill the core requirement in philosophy.

Theology (2 courses)

- “Through the Core, the Theology Department is committed to fostering in students a critically appreciative awareness of the religious dimension of human existence, and to assisting students in reflecting upon their own experience and understanding in that

enlarged context. The first course provides this foundation while the second course allows students to develop their critical awareness by applying it to a particular area of interest in religion or theology.”

- All students take two semesters of theology. Students begin with either THEO-001 The Problem of God or THEO-011 Introduction to Biblical Literature in their first year. The second half of the requirement can be fulfilled with any intermediate-level theology course (anything 001-199; THEO-011 can serve as an intermediate course for students who begin with 001) or any course in another department that is cross-listed with Theology.

Writing (1 course, plus an Integrated Writing requirement in the major)

- Every Georgetown student will take one writing course, WRIT-015 Writing and Culture Seminar, which provides students with opportunities to connect their writing with critical reading and thinking, inquiry, and analysis. The Writing and Culture Seminar approaches writing through three interrelated frameworks: writing as a tool for inquiry, writing as a process, and practice writing in different rhetorical situations. Each section focuses on a cultural theme, with readings and assignments that engage students with compelling questions and problems. Seminar readings provide texts for analysis as well as models and motives for student writing.

Humanities: Art, Literature, and Culture (1 course)

- Every student must take one course labeled HALC
- “Students explore ancient and modern civilizations, gain insight into the value of other cultures and critically examine their own. They learn to see, evaluate, interpret and communicate human experience through literary texts, artistic creations, material objects, and critical concepts. Those who create or perform works of art experience directly the discipline and revelatory impact of artistic expression.”

History (2 courses)

- Two courses:
 - One lower-level survey course that offers “students access to trans-national and cross-cultural developments, raising their awareness of global themes and issues and leading them to examine the interaction of diverse cultures and groups.”
 - The other “aims to expose students to the many components of the discipline of history through focused study of particular historical events, periods or themes. This course (HIST 099) also leads students to consider questions of historical sources, analysis, and writing, and does so less through the breadth of the covered developments, and more through focused study of specific developments and contexts.
- Students with a score of 5 on the Advanced Placement test in European or World History will be awarded three course credits in place of the survey course. Students with a 5 on both the European and the World history tests will receive six credits and have completed all History requirements. Students with a score of 4 on the Advanced Placement test in European or World History will receive no credit, but fulfill the History requirement with any two History courses, numbered 100 or above.

- Majors in Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, or Russian may satisfy the history requirement for the survey course by taking either semester of the regional history survey appropriate to their major.

Math/Science (2 courses)

- Includes courses in the following departments: Biology, Chemistry, Computer Science, Mathematics & Statistics, and Physics
- The Math/Science requirement may be fulfilled by two courses in either of the following two patterns:
 - any introductory foundational courses from biology, chemistry, physics, computer science, math, or economics. For example: BIO 103 and 104 or BIO 113 and 114.
 - any pair of courses provided one is taken in Biology, Chemistry and Physics and the other is taken in Math or Computer Science.

Social Science (2 courses)

- The core requirement in social science introduces students to the study of human society from the perspective of the disciplines of anthropology, economics, government, linguistics, psychology, and/or sociology. The requirement is any two courses in the same discipline/department, generally starting with an introductory course in the chosen discipline.
- Students with the following science majors are exempt from the Social Science requirement: Biochemistry, Biological Physics (BS track), Biology, Biology of Global Health, Chemistry, Environmental Biology, Neurobiology, or Physics (BS track)

Engaging Diversity (2 courses)

- An article by Molly Simio in *The Hoya* (student newspaper) says that this requirement was added by a vote in 2015, and students in the class of 2020 were the first to have this requirement ([Simio 2015](#)).
- “All Georgetown students are required to take two "engaging diversity" courses to ensure the opportunity to engage with diversity issues in two different contexts: One domestic and one global.
- The engaging diversity requirement will prepare students to be responsible, reflective, self-aware and respectful global citizens through recognizing the plurality of human experience and engaging with different cultures, beliefs, and ideas. By fulfilling the requirement, students will become better able to appreciate and reflect upon how human diversity and human identities shape our experience and understanding of the world.
- Many courses that meet the diversity requirement also meet other curricular requirements (e.g., core, major, minor) in each school. Courses fulfilling this requirement are indicated with the DIVG (global) and DIVD (domestic) attribute tags in the schedule of classes. Note that while some courses may carry both tags (i.e., global and domestic), students are still required to take two engaging diversity courses in total.”

Mastery of a foreign language through the intermediate level

- “All students in the College must achieve proficiency in a language (ancient or modern) through the intermediate level. During New Student Orientation, placement exams are offered in most languages. Students who do not place above the intermediate level of a

language must fulfill the requirement by completing language coursework through the intermediate level.”

Best Practices:

- Georgetown’s “First Year Options” is unique because it offers a variety of not only topics, but also structure. Some of the seminars are more interdisciplinary and some carry a heavier course load and, therefore, complete a larger number of core requirements.

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

Overview:

George Washington University is a private university located in Washington, DC that was founded in 1821. It has a total undergraduate enrollment of about 11,100 students. *US News and World Report* ranked it 56th among national universities. Also, notably, the 2016 edition of the Princeton Review’s “Best 380 Colleges” ranked GW first in the country for “Top Internship Opportunities.” The Columbian College of Arts and Sciences (CCAS) forms the core of the university, with over 8,000 students, 53 majors, and 61 minors. The undergraduate college embraces the “[engaged liberal arts](#)” by drawing on its proximity to immense resources in the middle of Washington, DC. CCAS faculty reformed the curriculum in 2009 by reducing the overall number of required courses from 42 credit hour to 24 credits. This was the first change to the core curriculum in 20 years. More details of this change are discussed below.

The Curriculum Change:

CCAS faculty voted in 2009 to significantly change the General Curriculum Requirements (GCR) by reducing the overall number of credits required. Under the previous curriculum requirements, “students took six credits in mathematics and statistics, nine to 12 credits in natural and physical sciences, six in social and behavioral sciences, three credits in creative and performing arts, 12 hours in the humanities, and six to eight hours in foreign language or culture” for a total of about 42 credits (Anand). However, a curriculum task force commission recommended reducing the number of required credits to 24 by cutting requirements in math, lab sciences, and the foreign language/culture requirement. In addition to reducing the total number of curriculum requirements, the new curriculum, called G-PAC, emphasizes three learning goals: Perspective, Analysis and Communication.

Since initially rolling out in 2011, administrators in CCAS have continued to make changes to G-PAC. In 2012, a student, Jacob Garber, voiced concerns in *The GW Hatchet* about inconsistencies among courses that meet particular G-PAC credits: “Take for example, Spanish department courses like ‘Latinos in the U.S.,’ ‘Spanish Language, Culture, and Society’ and ‘General Readings in Spanish Literature.’ Each fulfills the global or cross-cultural GPAC requirement, but somehow, the English department course ‘Latino Literature and Culture,’ does not” (Garber). Garber notes that, over time, courses have been added to the list of courses that meet different requirements, but there are still inconsistencies and problems.

In 2015, CCAS again made changes to the G-PAC curriculum to cut costs and make it easier for students to meet graduation requirements, all in an effort to meet the goals of GW’s Strategic

Plan amid budget shortfalls (Smith). CCAS made two big changes. First, faculty approved a new plan that allows courses taken outside of GW to meet G-PAC requirements. This includes AP/IB and courses taken abroad (McIntire). Second, it removed a cap on the number of courses taken at other GW schools that can meet the G-PAC requirements. Originally, there was a cap of 18 credits that could be accepted from other schools (such as the Elliot School of International Affairs); however, the policy change now allows students to take more courses outside of CCAS.

G-PAC Rationale

“The General Education Curriculum of Columbian College trains students to engage in active intellectual inquiry by developing analytical skills and by developing diverse perspectives. The fundamental elements of this General Education Curriculum are Perspective, Analysis, and Communication (G-PAC). General Education PAC courses are required in a range of disciplines, providing students with breadth in their learning. But these courses also provide a strong foundation of coursework built on overlapping learning goals that focus on the development of rigorous analytical skills, in some cases including a broad social perspective and in others sharpening a student’s ability to communicate that analysis effectively. General Education PAC courses are created and required with the belief that students in Columbian College should not only participate actively in the political, social, cultural, and physical world surrounding them, but learn to provide leadership. Leadership, however, requires rigorous training in a variety of analytical skills, the development of broad social perspective, and the mastery of communication skills in multiple forms of media. When courses from the General Education Curriculum are combined with the in-depth study of a particular major, it is expected that graduates of Columbian College will be able to analyze a variety of problems from different disciplinary perspectives, work independently or collaboratively, as necessary, and leave college with the confidence that they can make a difference in society” (“General Education Curriculum - Perspective, Analysis, Communication (G- PAC)”).

[The G-PAC Curriculum](#)

Students must meet GW University requirements and CCAS’s G-PAC requirements. Both are detailed below. More information can also be found in the PDFs titled “General Education Curriculum - Perspective, Analysis, Communication (G- PAC),” as well as “General Education Curriculum for Columbian College of Arts and Sciences.” Both are linked below under Sources.

University General Education Requirements:

- Writing—one approved course in university writing and two writing-in-the-disciplines (WID) approved courses
- Humanities—one approved course in the humanities that involves critical thinking skills
- Mathematics or Statistics—one approved course in either mathematics or statistics
- Natural or Physical Science—one approved laboratory course that employs the process of scientific inquiry
- Social Sciences—two approved courses in the social sciences

Columbian College General Education Curriculum:

- Arts—one approved course in the arts that involves the study or creation of artwork based on an understanding or interpretation of artistic traditions or knowledge of art in a contemporary context
- Global or Cross-Cultural Perspective—one approved course that analyzes the ways in which institutions, practices, and problems transcend national and regional boundaries
- Humanities—one approved course in the humanities that involves critical thinking skills (in addition to the one course in this category required by the University General Education Requirement)
- Local or Civic Engagement—one approved course that develops the values, ethics, disciplines, and commitment to pursue responsible public action
- Natural or Physical Science—one approved laboratory course that employs the process of scientific inquiry (in addition to the one course in this category required by the University General Education Requirement)
- Oral Communication—one course in oral communication

Certain courses are approved to fulfill the requirement in more than one of these categories. Courses taken in fulfillment of G-PAC may also be counted toward majors or minors. Transfer courses taken prior to, but not after, admission to George Washington University may count toward the University General Education Requirement and G-PAC, if those transfer courses are equivalent to GW courses that have been approved by the University and the College.

Supporting Documents:

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HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Overview:

Harvard University is a private Ivy League university in Cambridge, Massachusetts. It has a total enrollment of 22,000, including 6,700 undergraduates in Harvard College. *US News and World Report* ranked Harvard 2nd among national universities, and has consistently ranked it first or second in the country. Harvard College proposed and passed curriculum reforms in 2007; however, the reformed curriculum was criticized by many, so in 2014 the Dean of the College created the General Education Review Committee (GERC) to consider the weaknesses of the curriculum and suggest changes. A new curriculum was proposed in 2015. The new curriculum is expected to be implemented in Fall 2018.

Current Requirements (Until Fall 2018)

Concentrations and Secondary fields

- Students can choose one or two [Concentrations](#) (similar to majors)
- Students can choose one or multiple [Secondary Fields](#) (similar to minors)

Expository Writing 20

Bearing in mind the Faculty's goal that students are proficient in scholarly writing, freshmen are required to take Expository Writing 20, a one-semester course offered by the Harvard College Writing Program that focuses on analytic composition and revision. Expos 20 courses are taught in small seminars and students meet one-on-one with instructors (called preceptors) regularly to refine writing skills. Depending on the result of the summer writing placement exam, some students may take Expos 10 in the fall, followed by Expos 20 in the spring. In rare instance, students may elect to enroll in both semesters of Humanities 10 to satisfy the writing requirement.

Language Requirement

All students are required to have proficiency in a foreign language by the end of their second year in the College. Students can meet the foreign language requirement in a variety of ways, including through coursework, Harvard Placement Exams, AP, IB, and SAT II scores.

Freshman Seminars (see PDF brochure [here](#))

While not a requirement for the AB or SB, the Faculty recommend that students consider enrolling in one of the Freshman Seminars. Boasting small class sizes (fewer than 15), seminars are a chance for students to interact with world-class faculty in an intimate setting on topics ranging from poetry and neuroscience to the nature of democracy and everything between.

General Education Program:

Complementing the rest of the curriculum, this program aims to achieve four goals that link the undergraduate experience to the lives students will lead after Harvard:

- to prepare students for civic engagement;
- to develop students' understanding of the ethical dimensions of what they say and do.
- to enable students to respond critically and constructively to change; and
- to teach students to understand themselves as products of, and participants in, traditions of art, ideas, and values;

Students must complete one letter-graded course in each of the following eight General Education categories:

Aesthetic and Interpretive Understanding

Courses in Aesthetic and Interpretive Understanding should:

- develop skills in criticism, that is, aesthetic responsiveness and interpretive ability;
- develop skills in understanding written, aural, visual, kinaesthetic, or other forms by examining primary texts in any language, linguistic structures, and/or works of art in one or more media;
- teach how to analyze these works in a contextual framework, such as critical theory, aesthetics, philosophy of art, rhetoric, theories of language and meaning, or theories of perception; and
- where practicable and appropriate, include experiences out of the classroom, such as visits to exhibitions, performances, and readings, or interactions with performers, directors, and curators, or allow students to undertake creative work

United States in the World

There are many topics of wide practical and intellectual interest that courses in The United States in the World might explore, including income disparity, health care and the state, affirmative action, immigration, election law, zoning and urban sprawl, red state-blue state, bilingualism, originalism and the interpretation of historical documents. Courses on The United States in the World should:

- examine American social, political, legal, cultural, and/or economic institutions, practices, and behaviors, from contemporary, historical, and/or analytic perspectives;
- demonstrate the connections between those institutions, practices, and behaviors and those of other societies in the world, and/or show change over time within the United States and its colonial antecedents; and
- use the material studied to give students critical tools to understand the social, cultural, political, legal, or economic issues confronted by the United States in a global context.

Societies of the World

There are many topics of wide practical and intellectual interest that courses in Societies of the World might explore, including immigration policy, ethnic identity and statehood, religion and government, global markets, constitutionalism. Courses in Societies of the World should:

- examine one or more societies outside the United States;
- demonstrate connections between societies and/or across historical periods in a single society; and
- relate the material studied to the kinds of social, cultural, political, legal, linguistic, or economic issues students might encounter in a global context.

Science of the Physical Universe

General education courses in Science of the Physical Universe teach central facts and concepts in the physical sciences and engineering, and relate them to issues that students will encounter in their daily lives. These courses are not intended to produce budding scientists or engineers, but rather to provide a firm grounding in the nature of the physical world. General education courses

in this category should therefore convey material that is broadly applicable to life after college. In order to do so, they should:

- introduce key concepts, facts, and theories about the physical universe that equip students to understand better our world and the universe;
- teach the nature of experiments in the physical sciences and engineering, ideally through laboratory experiences;
- relate scientific concepts, facts, theories, and methods to problems of wide concern; and
- where relevant and appropriate (as determined by the instructor), discuss one or more of the following: the history, philosophy, contexts, and institutions of the scientific work being taught.

Science of Living Systems

General education courses in Science of Living Systems teach central facts and concepts in the life sciences and engineering and relate them to life outside of the classroom or laboratory. These courses do not strive to train students to become future scientists or to enable students to take more advanced science classes; therefore, they are not expected to cover in depth any specific scientific sub-discipline. Rather, general education courses in Science of Living Systems should convey material that is broadly applicable to life after college. To do so, they should:

- introduce key concepts, facts, and theories relevant to living systems;
- teach the nature of experiments on living systems, ideally through laboratory experiences;
- relate scientific concepts, facts, theories, and methods to problems of wide concern; and
- where relevant and appropriate (as determined by the instructor), discuss one or more of the following: the history, philosophy, contexts, and institutions of the scientific work being taught.

Ethical Reasoning

By challenging students to evaluate, and possibly change, the assumptions and values they grew up with, these courses promote our students' personal development and build the capacities for argument and deliberation essential for effective civic agency. Advances in science and technology will continue to raise difficult and unanticipated ethical questions into the future, and the impact of social and economic globalization is felt perhaps most keenly when ethical convictions of different cultures collide. Students must be equipped to engage with the challenges that these twenty-first-century realities will raise. Courses in Ethical Reasoning should:

- teach how to reason about moral and political beliefs and practices, and how to deliberate and assess claims about ethical issues;
- examine competing conceptions and theories of ethical concepts such as the good life, obligation, rights, justice, and liberty;
- teach how to assess and weigh the reasons for and against adopting these various conceptions and theories;
- apply these conceptions and theories to concrete ethical dilemmas of the sort students will encounter in their lives, such as those that arise in medicine, law, business, politics, and daily life; and
- where appropriate, acquaint students with value systems different from their own, such as those of different religions or different historical periods and those expressed in different languages, or with empirical studies of moral life.

Empirical and Mathematical Reasoning

Empirical reasoning should be taught in the context of a variety of subjects so that students can work on topics of intrinsic interest to them, such as medicine and disease, public policy and political behavior, and legal or economic decision-making. We expect that many students will fulfill the requirement with courses in the statistical and analytical methods of their field.

Mathematics and logic courses that demonstrate the applicability of their methods to concrete problems should also count toward this requirement. Courses in Empirical and Mathematical Reasoning should:

- teach the conceptual and theoretical tools used in reasoning and problem solving, such as statistics, probability, mathematics, logic, and decision theory;
- provide exercises in which students apply these tools to concrete problems of wide concern; and
- where practicable, familiarize students with some of the mistakes human beings typically make in reasoning and problem solving.

Culture and Belief

There are many topics of wide practical and intellectual interest that courses in Culture and Belief might address: problems of translation, the concept of authorship (its significance for claims about plagiarism or copyright), censorship, conflicting interpretations of religious and other texts, institutional mediation of aesthetic experience (art museums, the music industry, the church), canon formation, the tensions between modernity and reactionary thinking, violence and its representation. Courses in Culture and Belief should:

- develop an understanding of and appreciation for traditions of culture and belief in human societies;
- introduce students to primary texts in any language, works of art in one or more media, or ethnographies, social histories, or other secondary texts;
- develop the ability to analyze these works in the light of their historical, social, political, economic, religious, and/or cross-cultural conditions of production and reception;
- examine ways in which traditions of culture and belief shape the identities of individuals and communities; and
- draw connections between the material covered in the course and cultural issues of concern or interest that are likely to arise in students' own lives.

New Requirements (Beginning Fall 2018)

Based on recommendations from the General Education Review Committee's (GERC) Final Report, in March 2016 FAS faculty approved a new set of requirements for Harvard College students:

- four General Education courses (one from each of four perspectives): Aesthetics & Culture; Histories, Societies, Individuals; Science, Technology in Society; Ethics & Civics
- one course from each of the three main divisions of the Faculty of Arts & Sciences (including SEAS), and
- one course that demonstrates quantitative facility.

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Overview:

Northwestern University is a private research university located in Evanston, Illinois. Northwestern has a total undergraduate enrollment of about 8,300. Of which, the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences accounts for about 4,300 students. In 2016, *US News* ranked Northwestern 12th in the nation.

Northwestern is currently in the process of undergoing a review of its degree requirements and general education requirements. To that end, Adrian Randolph, dean of the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences recently created the ad hoc Committee on Degree Requirements. The committee is “charged with conducting a comprehensive review of the College’s degree requirements and recommending revisions that will best serve the needs and interests of our students. The Committee will engage faculty, students, College leadership and others in a review of the College’s current curriculum and degree requirements. The Committee will then develop a set of learning outcomes that should characterize a Weinberg College graduate—skills, knowledge, and ways of thinking that students should have when they graduate from the College. Once these desired outcomes have been identified, the Committee will recommend revisions to the degree requirements so that College coursework and credits support the desired learning outcomes. A particular focus of the Committee will be the College’s general education requirements and the proposed social inequalities and diversity requirement. The Committee will report directly to Dean Adrian Randolph. While the Committee will work independently, the Committee’s recommendations will ultimately be brought before the College’s Curriculum Policy Committee and the College faculty for consideration and review” ([Ad Hoc Committee on Degree Requirements](#)).

Degree Requirements:

Distribution Requirements

Students must take two approved courses in each of these areas: Natural Sciences, Formal Studies, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Historical Studies, Ethics and Values, Literature and Fine Arts

Additional Notes:

- Some “interdisciplinary studies” courses are approved for more than one distribution area. Students can choose in which one eligible area to count it.
- Courses taken P/N do not count for Distribution Requirement credit.
- A maximum of two AP or IB credits may be counted toward these requirements; credits must be in two different areas.
- Students, including transfer students, may not satisfy Distribution Requirements through coursework from other universities.

First-Year Seminars

First-year seminars are the key component of the first-year experience as a Weinberg student. Seminars are small, writing- and discussion-oriented courses geared to the investigation of a specific theme or issue and intended to hone your abilities as a critical thinker and effective writer. Successful completion of the first-year seminars, in fact, is the primary way for Weinberg

students to satisfy the College's writing requirement. All first-year students are expected to take two first-year seminars, except in unusual circumstances.

First-year seminars do not count toward Weinberg College's distribution requirements, and most departments and programs exclude them from counting toward major and minor requirements. They do not have prerequisites and do not provide a general survey of a discipline; instead they focus on a narrow but exciting aspect of a field. At the same time, they foster a more personal relationship with faculty members than is possible in larger courses. Your fall seminar instructor will be your adviser for your first quarter.

Writing Proficiency

All students in Weinberg College are required to demonstrate writing proficiency before graduation in two courses at Northwestern. Typically, these courses are first-year seminars. Students who do not complete the writing proficiency requirement through first-year seminars take other courses (listed below), or they sometimes choose to submit a writing portfolio instead.

Most students complete the writing proficiency requirement through their first-year seminars. (HPME and MMSS students are required to take only one first-year seminar, and they have only a one-course writing requirement.) Students who do not complete both required seminars in the first year should discuss the situation with their adviser as soon as possible.

Majors and Minors

- Students must have a major, but there are additional options including double majors, adjunct majors, ad hoc majors, special admission majors, and dual bachelor's degree programs.
- Students have the option of using their electives to complete a minor, concentration, or certificate in some area.
- Majors and minors adhere to the "rule of three;" that is, students can have up to two majors and a minor or a major and two minors.

Additional Requirements

- All Weinberg College students must earn at least 45 units of credit in order to graduate.
 - Exceptions: Special limits apply to ISP, HPME, and dual bachelor's degree program (BA/BMusic and BA/BS) students.
- Students must be in Weinberg College for the last three quarters before you complete your degree requirements.
- No more than 6 units of internship credit may be counted toward the required 45 units of credit.
- No more than 11 units of credit offered by other schools of the University may be counted toward the 45 units required for a BA degree from Weinberg College.

POMONA COLLEGE

Overview:

Pomona College is a private liberal arts college located in Claremont, California with a total undergraduate enrollment of about 1,600 students. *US News and World Report* ranked it 4th among national liberal arts colleges in 2016. Uniquely, Pomona has the benefit of being part of the Claremont Colleges, a consortium of five college and two graduate schools with adjoining campuses. Although Pomona itself is small, the schools within Claremont Colleges pool their resources, so that students are able to take classes in intercollegiate departments and programs.

General Education Requirements

The Critical Inquiry Seminar

- “The goal of the Critical Inquiry seminar is to prepare first-year students to participate fully and successfully in the intellectual community that is Pomona College. To this end, students learn in [The Critical Inquiry Seminar] to engage the work and ideas of others; to articulate nuanced, reflective positions of their own; and to present their ideas in a sustained, persuasive manner.
- If the Critical Inquiry seminar is not passed with at least a C- grade, the student will be required in the spring semester to undertake a Writing Tutorial – a series of meetings with the Director or Assistant Director of College Writing – to refine the skills of academic written inquiry. Within the subsequent two semesters (that is, by the end of the sophomore year), the student must then complete a writing-intensive seminar. Writing intensive courses generally require 20-25 pages of graded writing from three to six papers spread out over the course of the semester and provide opportunity for revision from instructor or peer review.”

The Breadth of Study Requirements

- Students must take at least one course in each of the five Breadth Areas. The five areas and their respective disciplines are listed below.
 - Students must meet Breadth of Study Requirements through courses taught at The Claremont College (i.e., not through study abroad or study away).
- Area 1: Creative Expression
 - Art and Art History, Classics, Dance, Literatures (see below), Media Studies, Music Theatre
 - Literatures includes English, Chinese, French, German, Japanese, Russian, Spanish and classical literatures, including literature in translation. Foreign language and literature courses offered at less than an advanced level (i.e. are numbered less than 100) do not satisfy an area requirement.
- Area 2: Social Institutions and Human Behavior
 - Anthropology; Economic; Environmental Analysis; International Relations; Linguistics and Cognitive Science; Philosophy, Politics and Economics; Politics; Psychology; Public Policy Analysis; Science, Technology and Society; Sociology.
- Area 3: History, Values, Ethics and Cultural Studies
 - Africana Studies; American Studies; Asian Studies; Asian American Studies; Chicano/a Latino/a Studies; History; Latin American Studies; Philosophy; Religious Studies; Gender & Women’s Studies
- Area 4: Physical and Biological Sciences

- Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Geology, Molecular Biology, Neuroscience, Physics
- Area 5: Mathematical Reasoning
 - Mathematics, Computer Science, Formal Logic, Statistics

Dynamics of Difference and Power (DDP)

- “In 2006, the faculty of the College endorsed an optional component to its General Education Program dealing with the study of the Dynamics of Difference and Power (DDP). Completion of a DDP course is not a requirement, but rather an aspiration that all students are urged to fulfill. A DDP course is one that uses class, ethnicity, gender, race, religion and/or sexuality as categories of analysis and that examines power at the interpersonal, local, national and/or international levels.”

The Foreign Language Requirement

- All Pomona students must demonstrate proficiency in a language other than English by completing three semesters at Pomona
- However, test scores, placement tests, and other circumstances can exempt the requirement.

The Physical Education Requirement

- Students who are not intercollegiate athletes are required to take one physical education course during their first year at Pomona.

Major and Minor Requirements

- Students must have a major that is either through an established department, or self-created with the approval of a small committee of faculty.
- Students can have one major, two majors, a major and a minor, a major and two minors, or two majors and a minor.
- Senior Exercise
 - “Each student’s major will culminate in a senior exercise designed to deepen understanding and integrate the content and method of his or her field of study. Although the exercise will differ from field to field, each requires the student to demonstrate mastery of the methodology, principles and practices of the chosen field. Descriptions of senior exercises for the College’s majors are available in departmental offices. In some cases, portions of the senior exercise are not given course credit but nevertheless must be enrolled in for transcript notation.”

Credit Requirements

- Students must take at least 32 courses to earn their degree.
 - At least 30 of those courses must be earned after admission and before matriculation.
- There are more requirements and exceptions (for example for transfer students).

Noteworthy Best Practices

- Pomona only requires five courses to be taken to meet its Breadth of Study Requirement (similar to Wake Forest’s divisionals). This is lower than many other schools reviewed.

However, courses at Pomona are more comparable to a four-hour course at most other colleges. Still, this is significantly less than the amount of required coursework at some other schools (like W&M, which requires about 11 courses total).

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

Overview

St. John's College is a very small liberal arts college with two campuses in Annapolis, MD and Santa Fe, NM. It's total undergraduate enrollment is about 450-475. It is ranked 56th on *US News and World Report's* list of the best liberal arts colleges. "The liberal arts are at the heart of St. John's College and its wide-ranging, interdisciplinary curriculum focused on the most important books and ideas of Western civilization. All classes are conducted seminar-style, with faculty leading the discussion." Classes are broken down by topics and by year. The topics include: Literature, Philosophy and Theology, History and Social Science, Mathematics and Natural Science, and Music. In total, the four years represent roughly the equivalent of 134 hours at a typical university, with graduates receiving a Bachelor of Arts. There aren't options or electives; students follow a determined four-year path that is made up of multiple parts:

- Seminar (Each academic year spans a period of human thought, from ancient to modern)
- Junior and Senior Preceptorials (the option to pursue a certain book or philosopher a bit more deeply narrowly for a designated period of 7-8 weeks)
- Laboratory (Natural Sciences)
- Language Tutorials (Students learn ancient Greek during years 1 and 2, and modern French during years 3 and 4)
- Math Tutorials
- Music Tutorials

** While Brown encourages a significant amount of curricular freedom, St. John's tightly structures its curriculum. Students all follow essentially the same educational path, reading the same things and focusing on the same topics.

Noteworthy Best Practices:

- A curriculum that is consistent, with all students studying the same courses.
- A program where student's progress through their studies each year. This helps to continuously build knowledge over time rather than being able to forget it as courses progress.

TUFTS UNIVERSITY

Overview:

Tufts University is a private research university Total undergraduate enrollment of 5,200. The School of Arts and Sciences has about 4,400 students. In 2016, *US News and World Report* ranked Tufts 27th in the nation (tied with Wake Forest and the University of Michigan-Ann Arbor).

Degree Requirements:

There are four requirements to earn the Bachelor's Degree:

- Earn a minimum of 34 credits.
- Satisfy all foundation, distribution, and major requirements.
- Meet the quality requirement, earning grades of C- or better in three-quarters of the courses you have taken at Tufts under standard grading.
- Satisfy the residency requirement of eight full-time semesters, according to the stipulations outlined in The Bulletin.

Foundation Requirements

Writing Requirement

All liberal arts students are required to take two semesters of college writing in order to graduate. You should complete this requirement in your first year except under extraordinary circumstances. Most students complete this requirement by taking English 1 or English 3 in the first semester and English 2, Philosophy 1, or English 4 in the second semester, when the majority of such classes are offered.

Language/Culture

There are two parts to the Language/Culture requirement:

- First, students must demonstrate knowledge of a language other than English through the third semester college level.
- The second part may be satisfied in several different ways including: advanced courses in the same language, study of an additional language, or study of a specific culture through courses taught in English.
 - Students may place out of part or all of this requirement with Tufts language placement exams, SAT II/AP/IB/other scores, or a college transcript. Students who speak, read, and write proficiently in a language other than English can talk with their advising dean about possible exemption from this requirement.

World Civilizations

The world civilizations requirement focuses on an in-depth study of a non-Western civilization or the interaction of non-Western and Western civilizations with equal attention given to both. The definition of the non-Western world includes Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, and selected indigenous cultures of Oceania and North America.

Distribution Requirements

A liberal arts degree must include the following five areas: humanities, arts, social sciences, natural sciences, and mathematical sciences. The requirements are as follows:

- Students must complete two credits in each area for a total of ten credits, but they may not take more than two of their ten total credits from a single department or program.
- Students may use one approved pre-matriculation credit in each of the five distribution areas.
- Students may not use a single course in more than one distribution area.
- Students may only use one [experimental college](#) credit as a distribution requirement.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Overview:

The University of Chicago is a private Ivy League research university. *US News and World Report* ranked it 4th in 2016. Its undergraduate college has a total enrollment of about 5,900 students; however, its postgraduate programs total nearly 10,000. Chicago operates on a quarterly system rather than a semester system.

The Curriculum:

Introduction

Chicago's curriculum has remained largely unchanged for decades. Robert Maynard Hutchins – who led Chicago as President and Chancellor for more than 20 years – was seen as a pioneer in higher education for his creation of a tough core curriculum in the 1940s. Since then, Chicago has prided itself as one of the most academically rigorous universities in the world. However, faced with competition from peer institutions with less curriculum requirements, Chicago reduced its curriculum workload in the late 1990s. A 1998 *New York Times* [article](#) by Ethan Bronner describes the reduction in curriculum changes:

“The outgoing common core includes 8 quarters of science and math, 7 of humanities and civilization, 3 of social sciences and 3 of a foreign language, for a total of 21 courses. This means that the curriculum of a student's first two years is essentially predetermined. Some professors and administrators urged cutting that number to nine to make room for more electives and better focus on students' majors. After a bruising debate, the reduction, to go into effect next September, is relatively minor – down to 15 or 18, depending on how the foreign language requirement gets worked out. The change will mean that instead of accounting for half of a student's course work, the core will take up a third” (Bronner).

Since the late 1990s, the curriculum has remained intact, with only minor changes to the different course sequence options offered. The core curriculum embraces liberal learning with basic requirements. It envisions a structured path through the four undergraduate years. For the first two years, students must take 3-4 courses during each of the primary quarters (fall, winter, and spring). The aim is for students to complete GE requirements and introductory major courses during the first two years, and engage in deeper study and research for the remaining years. The curriculum consists of three parts: GE requirements, major requirements, and electives (which usually include courses that meet the language competency requirement). An [article](#) on the Uchicago website explains how “The Core” changes over time, – for example by adding Gender and Sexuality Studies to the Civilizations sequence – but still remains fundamentally the same.

“The Core” (GE Requirements)

Courses at the 10000-level that meet GE requirements are mostly taught in sequences of 2-3 quarters.

- Humanities, Civilization Studies, and the Arts (6 quarter courses)
 - “An essential component of general education is learning how to appreciate and analyze texts intellectually, historically, and aesthetically. Through this general education requirement, students learn how to interpret literary, philosophical, and historical texts in depth; how to identify significant intellectual problems posed by

those texts; and how to discuss and write about them perceptively and persuasively. They also learn how to study a visual or performing art form and how to study texts and art forms within a specific cultural and chronological frame.”

- Humanities (At least 2 quarters)
- Civilization Studies (At least 2 quarters)
- Arts (At least 1 quarter)
- Natural and Mathematical Sciences (6 quarter courses)
 - Physical Sciences (At least 2 quarters)
 - Biological Sciences (At least 2 quarters)
 - Mathematical Sciences (At least 1 quarter)
 - A 2-quarter Calculus is required for students taking Calculus to meet the GE requirement.
- Social Sciences (3 quarter courses)
 - Students pick between five different three-course series that broadly range the social, psychological, and political sciences.

Majors and Minors

- Majors range from nine to 19 courses, depending on the specific requirements of the different departments.
- Minors typically require five to seven courses and are counted towards one’s electives. Each program outlines its particular requirements for a minor.

Language Competency

“Students in the College are expected to demonstrate competence in a language other than English. The language competence requirement must be met by demonstrating reading, writing, and (where appropriate) listening and speaking skills equivalent to one year of college-level study. Students are expected to complete the language competence requirement in their first two years in the College.”

Noteworthy Best Practices:

- Similar to Duke, Chicago organizes one of its GE categories as a “Civilizations” sequence, rather than simply history. It is more fundamentally interdisciplinary. The “Humanities” sequence is also highly interdisciplinary and is very heavily focused on reading and analyzing primary texts.
- Chicago’s curriculum is similar to – but still far less intensive than – the St. John’s curriculum because they both emphasize the importance of a shared curricular experience, as well as a focus on primary textual analysis of civilizational classics.
 - Similarly, both St. Johns and Chicago promote a curriculum that progresses over the course of the four-year undergraduate period. Students learn classes in sequences.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

Overview:

UNC-Chapel Hill is a large public university, the flagship university in the UNC system. It has a total enrollment of 29,000 students, with about 18,400 undergraduate students. The College of Arts and Sciences accounts for more than 16,000 of those undergraduate students, including all of the University's first-year and second-year students, and more than 75 percent of junior and senior majors. In 2016, *US News and World Report* ranked UNC 30th in the nation. It is consistently ranked among the top public universities in the country, ranking 5th in that category in 2016. The last curriculum review took place more than a decade when the Making Connections Curriculum was put in place in 2006. However, the Dean of the College has instituted a curriculum review that is currently taking place. "Dean Kevin Guskiewicz has appointed a small Curriculum Revision Working Group to begin work on revising the General Education curriculum. The working group's task is to solicit and synthesize input from many different constituencies and experts and to launch the redesign itself, which will be carried out by a different committee mainly during the 2017 calendar year" ("[Curriculum 2019](#)"). UNC is in the process of having town hall meetings with all members of the community to discuss the curriculum review process and garner ideas. Updates will be continuously posted on the [General Education Curriculum Revision](#) website.

Making Connections: The General Education Curriculum

The Making Connections curriculum is divided into four broad categories: Foundations, Approaches, Connections, and Supplemental General Education.

Foundations

Requirements:

- English Composition and Rhetoric (CR) - One Course
- Foreign Languages (FL) - Through Level 3
- Quantitative Reasoning (QR) - One Course
- Lifetime Fitness (LFIT) - One Course

General Education rests on certain foundational skills and knowledge, including the ability to communicate effectively both in English and another language and to apply quantitative reasoning skills in context. Consequently, the Foundations component of the curriculum includes courses in English composition and rhetoric, at least one foreign language, and quantitative reasoning. It also includes a lifetime fitness course that encourages the lifelong health of graduates. In most cases, students should be able to fulfill the Foundations requirements by taking no more than 15 credit hours. Students must maintain continuous enrollment in Foundations foreign language courses until the requirement is satisfied; it is recommended to begin this requirement in the first or second semester. Students must complete the composition and rhetoric course in the first or second semester.

- **Note on the Importance of Communication Skills:** The faculty of the General College and the College of Arts and Sciences expects students to write and speak effectively. Instructors should help students realize that there is a direct relationship between thinking clearly, writing clearly, and speaking clearly. Faculty members in all disciplines and professions should therefore develop the writing and speaking skills of their students. Students should expect to be graded on spelling, grammar, and style, as well as on the

content and organization of their written work; in addition, students should expect to be graded on presentation, style, poise, and diction, as well as on the content and organization of their oral presentations.

Approaches

The Making Connections curriculum also acquaints students with six distinctive Approaches to knowledge, as represented by courses in the physical and life sciences, the social and behavioral sciences, historical analysis, philosophical and/or moral reasoning, literary arts, and the visual and performing arts. Students meet these requirements by taking courses worth a total of 25 credit hours.

Requirements:

- Physical and Life Sciences (PL, PX) - Two Courses
- Social and Behavioral Sciences (SS, HS) - Three Courses
- Humanities and Fine Arts (PH, LA, VP) - Three Courses

Connections

The Making Connections curriculum builds on previously acquired knowledge and establishes links between discrete forms of knowledge, both by encouraging interdisciplinary contact and conversation and by inviting students to develop and apply their academic expertise in environments beyond the University classroom.

Because Connections courses may meet multiple requirements at once (including Approaches requirements, other Connections requirements, major and/or minor requirements, or the Supplemental General Education requirement), most students should be able to fulfill the eight Connections requirements without taking credit hours in addition to those needed to fulfill Foundations, Approaches, and major/minor requirements.

Requirements:

- Communication Intensive (CI), One Course
- Quantitative Intensive (QI), One Course
- Experiential Education (EE), One Course
- U.S. Diversity (US), One Course
- North Atlantic World (NA), One Course
- Beyond the North Atlantic World (BN), One Course
- World before 1750 (WB), One Course
- Global Issues (GL), One Course

Supplemental General Education

Students who pursue the bachelor of arts degree also must satisfy a Supplemental General Education requirement. The intent of this requirement is to broaden a student's perspective on the major by examining its relationship to work in at least one other field. Students may fulfill the Supplemental General Education requirement in three ways:

- By completing a second major or a minor; or
- By completing three courses (nine hours) above 199 that are offered outside the home department or curriculum of the first major. These three courses can neither be used to

fulfill the requirements of the first major nor be cross-listed with courses that a student has used to satisfy major requirements; or

- By completing a concentration outside a professional school as part of the degree requirements for graduating from the school.

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

Overview:

The University of Virginia is a public research university located in Charlottesville, Virginia. It is considered a “public ivy,” and was ranked 24th by *US News and World Report* in 2016. UVA’s total undergraduate student population is about 16,500. UVA is divided into several undergraduate and graduate schools including business, public policy, law, and medical schools. This research focuses only on the College of Arts and Sciences, which is the largest of the undergraduate schools.

New Curriculum Changes:

*Note: All relevant documents, articles, and records of the curriculum review process can be found [here](#). There is also a helpful in-depth summary [article](#) from *The Cavalier Daily* that explains the proposed changes and the process.*

After two years of review, the General Education Committee (GEC) unanimously approved and published a proposal to change the curriculum for the first time in 40 years. The faculty approved the proposal and voted 210-41 to proceed with a pilot program. The proposed pilot program curriculum changes will take effect in the fall semester of 2018. In its final [white paper](#), the GEC said that, “The two primary values embodied by the current [40-year-old] GE curriculum are individual choice and variety of experience. Conspicuously missing from much of our GE curriculum are values of open inquiry and reflection, shared intellectual experiences, and synthesis and connection across disciplines and fields of knowledge” (4). Thus, the GEC says that its newly proposed GE curriculum:

- “fosters shared intellectual experiences in four distinct ways of apprehending the world. These four modes of apprehension or inquiry would serve as the organizing structure of the core first-year experience;
- contextualizes fundamental global literacies within one core educational component;
- frames a coherent array of experiences across disciplines; and
- provides every student opportunities to reflect upon and synthesize their own learning experiences” (5).

Main Components of the New Curriculum

- Engagements:
 - “A set of core first-year courses (8 credits total) in four critical engagements: (1) Aesthetic Engagement, (2) Engaging Difference, (3) Empirical Engagement, and (4) Ethical Engagement.
 - Designed and taught by a rotating cohort of the College’s most committed scholar-teachers with a faculty ratio of 1:50” (6).
- Literacies:
 - World Languages (Proficiency through 2020)

- Rhetoric for the 21st Century (i.e., written, oral, and digital communication: 6 credits)
- Computation, Quantification, and Data (6 credits)
- Disciplines:
 - “Students will take a course in each of the following six (or seven) categories:
 - Artistic, Interpretive, and Philosophical Inquiry
 - The Chemical and Physical Universe
 - Culture and Societies of the World
 - Historical Perspectives
 - Living Systems
 - Social and Economic Systems
 - Science and Society
 - Courses that comprise the “Disciplines” component will fundamentally continue to be taught by departments and other existing programs. Faculty to propose which category best represents the approach of their individual courses.
 - The committee recommends that students fulfill these requirements across six departments. The committee also recommends suspending the current policy of double counting courses to meet requirements” (7).

The College Fellows

- The proposal also calls for the creation of College Fellows, which are the “core of our proposal” and are “the means by which we hope to put the curriculum at the center of College life” (8).
- The College Fellows would design and teach the first-year Engagement courses together.

Current Curriculum Requirements:

Competency Requirements

- First Writing Requirement (FWR)
 - Students may meet the first writing requirement in one of two ways: by successfully completing one of the FWR-eligible ENWR courses, or by earning exemption.
- Second Writing Requirement
 - All students except Echols Scholars must complete a Second Writing Requirement with a grade of C- or better. To meet the Second Writing Requirement, a class must:
 - Assign at least two writing assignments in English totaling 4,000 words (20 pages) or more independent of quizzes and final examinations
 - Have a student/faculty ratio no greater than 30/1
- Foreign Language Requirement
 - Undergraduate students must earn anywhere from zero to 14 foreign language credits, depending on their foreign language placement examination scores. The requirement should be fulfilled before the seventh semester in the College.

Area Requirements

- All undergraduate students except [Echols Scholars](#) and [Forum Participants](#) are required to fulfill Area Requirements by earning the proper number of credits from courses taken in

each of five different academic subject areas. The list of subject areas and their related credit requirement is:

- Social Sciences – 6 credits from two different departments
- Humanities – 6 credits from two different categories
- Historical Studies – one 3 or more credit course
- Non-western Perspectives – one 3 or more credit course
- Natural Science and Mathematics – 12 credits from two different departments
- Transfer credit earned before matriculation may be applied toward fulfillment of area requirements.
- It is strongly recommended that all area requirements be completed by the end of the fourth semester.
- Courses taken to fulfill an area requirement may count toward a major and also satisfy the Second Writing Requirement.
- All courses must be taken for credit and for a grade.
- Classes that qualify for area requirements:
 - Cannot simultaneously meet more than two area requirements, even if cross-listed
 - Cannot be taken for Audit (AU)
 - Cannot be taken Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
 - Cannot be a Liberal Arts Seminar (LASE)
 - Cannot be a University Seminar (USEM)

Forum Requirements

- Beginning Fall 2016, all undergraduate students selected to participate in a College Forum are required to complete the corresponding Forum requirements by earning the proper number of credits from the categories and courses listed on the individual Forum webpage.

Noteworthy Best Practices:

- The Engagement courses that are part of the new curriculum provide a shared experience for all first-year students, and thus help to create a closer sense of community.
- The College Fellows program is an interesting and unique component of the new Engagement courses. It could be a model for making Wake's FYS a more shared and interdisciplinary experience.

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Overview:

Vanderbilt University is a private research university located in Nashville, Tennessee. Vanderbilt's undergraduate student population is about 6,800. It was ranked 15th by *US News and World Report* in 2016, unchanged from its 2015 ranking. Vanderbilt promotes a liberal arts education, quality teaching, and research. Vanderbilt's undergraduate schools include the College of Arts and Sciences, the Blair School of Music, the School of Engineering, and the Peabody College of Education and Human Development. This research only focuses on the College of Arts and Sciences, which accounts for about 4,200 (roughly 60 %) of all undergraduate students.

Achieving eXcellence in Liberal Education (AXLE)

- AXLE is Vanderbilt’s core curricular requirement, and it is made up of the Writing Requirement and the Liberal Arts Requirements.

The Writing Requirement (three to four courses)

- English Composition (appropriate test score or one course)
 - Writing skills are essential for students to succeed at University and beyond. The College of Arts & Science AXLE curriculum requires that all students demonstrate competence in English composition. This requirement can be satisfied by passing English 1100; by transfer credit for English 1100 or for specific English 1000-level Writing courses; by presenting qualifying scores on the SAT Writing and Critical Reasoning tests or the ACT English and Writing tests; or by earning appropriate AP/IB or transfer credit for specific
- *First-Year Writing Seminar* (one course)
- 1000-level W requirement (one course before the end of the fourth semester)
- One 1000-level or 2000-level or higher W course or one Oral Communications course

The Liberal Arts Requirement (*thirteen courses*)

- This requirement is comparable to WF divisionals.
- HCA – Humanities and the Creative Arts (three courses)
- INT – International Cultures (three courses)
 - Foreign Language Proficiency
 - “One of the three courses presented in fulfillment of this category must be an approved second semester language acquisition class taught at Vanderbilt University, unless (a) the student successfully completes any higher level class taught in a language other than English at Vanderbilt University, or (b) the student successfully demonstrates proficiency in a language other than English at or above the level achieved by approved second semester language acquisition classes taught at Vanderbilt University. All students must complete three courses in this category, irrespective of previous language study or proficiency in a language other than English.”
- US – History and Culture of the United States (one course)
- MNS – Mathematics and Natural Sciences (three courses)
 - One of which must include a laboratory science course.
- SBS – Social and Behavioral Sciences (two courses)
- P – Perspectives (one course)
 - “Courses in Perspectives give significant attention to individual and cultural diversity, multicultural interactions, sexual orientation, gender, racial, ethical, religious, and “Science and Society” issues within a culture across time or between cultures, thereby extending the principles and methods associated with the liberal arts to the broader circumstances in which students live. These courses emphasize the relationship of divergent ethics and moral values on contemporary social issues and global conflicts.”

Majors and Minors

- Outside of the writing and liberal arts requirements, the core of the Vanderbilt curriculum is majors. Students can have one to three majors. They may also pick minors.
 - There are over 50 different majors.
- [Interdisciplinary Programs](#)
 - Students can create their own interdisciplinary major with the help of advisors, and with the permission of a dean. Details on the process and requirements for a self-created interdisciplinary major can be found on page 53 of the [A&S portion of the course bulletin](#).

Best Practices:

- Vanderbilt includes US history and culture as one of its core liberal arts requirements. Wake Forest does not require any course that is specifically focused on the U.S.
- Vanderbilt’s Liberal Arts Requirement includes 13 courses; Wake’s divisional requirements only include 8 courses total. However, one of these courses is a part of the language requirement, and there is also the additional “History and Culture of the U.S.” category. Still, Vanderbilt requires significantly more divisional-type courses.
 - But there are less restrictions: Vanderbilt doesn’t require that courses be taught in more than one department under each category (as WF does).
- The “Perspectives” course requirement incorporates designated diversity classes into the curriculum. This is similar to the “Diverse Learning Initiative” courses at Williams, and the “Diverse Perspectives in Liberal Learning” courses at Brown.

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS

Overview:

Washington University in St. Louis is a private research university founded in 1853 with a total undergraduate enrollment of about 7500. Of which, about 4,000 students are in the College of Art and Sciences, the school that is the main focus of this review. In 2016, *US News* ranked WU St. Louis 19th in the nation. In recent years, the undergraduate college underwent a significant review of its curriculum. In the Fall of 2008, a New Curriculum Review Committee was created to consider issues with the Discovery Curriculum that existed at the time. It provided recommendations that were sent to the faculty for approval. “In April and May of 2009, the students and faculty of Arts & Sciences approved the proposals outlined in the final report of the New Curriculum Review Committee (NCRC). One of the stipulations of that report was the creation of a Curriculum Implementation Committee (CIC), both in order to address a number of unresolved questions and concerns related to the revised curriculum as well as to consider a range of logistical and technical changes entailed by its implementation. The CIC, which consists of 17 representatives of the faculty of Arts & Science, the College Office, the Office of Student Records, and the student body, was constituted in early November 2009 and met regularly during the course of the academic year (a list of members is included as Appendix A of this packet). What follows are our recommendations and guidelines for implementing the NCRC report” (CIC 1).

The Current Integrated Inquiry (IQ) Curriculum:

Distribution Areas

Arts & Sciences students must take at least three courses in each of three distribution areas:

- Natural Sciences & Mathematics (NSM)
 - This area includes courses from Biology, Chemistry, Environmental Biology, Earth & Planetary Sciences, Math, and Physics, as well as some courses from departments such as Anthropology and Psychology.
- Social & Behavioral Sciences (SSC)
 - SSC courses use both qualitative and quantitative observation to explore the social environment, relationships within society, and forms of human behavior. This area includes courses from Anthropology, Economics, Education, International & Area Studies, Political Science, and Psychology, as well as courses from other departments and programs, particularly the interdisciplinary “Studies” programs.
- Humanities (HUM)
 - This area comprises courses from Literature (both in English and in other languages), Classics, History, Philosophy, and Religious Studies, as well as courses in the creative arts, such as Dance, Drama, Music, & Writing.
- Language & Cultural Diversity (LCD) – there are two different possible paths:
 - Language Path
 - Students pursuing this path take at least three sequenced courses in the same foreign language
 - Culture Path
 - Students pursuing this path take any four courses of at least three units each designated LCD, which may include one or two semesters of a foreign language.

Integrations

Students must complete at least three Integrations in at least two areas of study. “Students must complete at least three Integrations in at least two areas of study (HUM, NSM, SSC, LCD). Many of the Integrations comprise courses from different areas of study; to count as an Integration in a particular area, then, at least one of the courses you select must belong to that area” (*Finding Your Path 7*). Below are the various types of Inquiries.

- Majors and Minors
 - All majors, minors, and programs include internal structure and coherence whereby courses build upon each other, reflect each other, and speak to each other in particularly meaningful ways, and they therefore all constitute an Integration.
- Focus and other First-Year Programs
 - “These specially-designed freshman programs consist of year-long linked seminars, often interdisciplinary, that address a particular object of inquiry such as the Literary Culture of Modern Ireland, the Global Citizenship Program, or the “Text & Tradition” of the Western literary and philosophical canon.”
- Study Away Programs
 - Led by Arts & Sciences faculty, these include the summer-long language and culture programs in places such as France, Senegal, and Spain, as well as summer-long thematic programs, such as the “MADE in France” program for dance and performing arts students, the “Pluralism, Politics, and Religion” program in Paris, or the Shakespeare’s Globe program in London. Working with a

WU faculty member, students on these programs have a particularly rich experience as they combine topical study with cultural immersion.

- Integrated Inquiries
 - “The final type comprises more than 20 Integrated Inquiries, called “IQs” for short, each of which explores an enduring question that educated, engaged, curious people often ask. Informed by our faculty’s longstanding history of interdisciplinary work, these IQs encourage students to explore questions from different disciplinary perspectives. Doing so provides a more nuanced and textured intellectual experience, one that befits the complex questions that have challenged great minds for decades, centuries, and even millennia.”

Other IQ Curriculum Requirements

- Writing 1
 - Students must earn a C+ or better. Writing 1 may not be taken pass/fail.
 - Taken the first year, this writing and argumentation course provides foundational skills to prepare students to write effectively for a university audience.
- Writing Intensive Course (WI)
 - Students must earn a C- or better, may not be taken pass/fail.
 - Courses designated WI further strengthen written communication skills.
- Applied Numeracy (AN)
 - Students must earn a C- or better, may not be taken pass/fail.
 - Courses designated AN enhance students’ ability to use numbers and numerical analysis in connections with problems involving statistical analyses, judgments of probability, and evaluation of quantifiable evidential support. AN includes courses that use real-world applications of numerical relationships and courses that employ mathematical modeling of natural and social phenomena.
- Social Differentiation (SD)
 - Courses taken SD consider the organization and possible division of societies by social categories such as race, class, gender, and ethnicity.
- A major with a minimum of 18 units numbered 300 or above, with the probable inclusion of a synthesizing capstone experience for seniors in most major departments.
- A total of 30 units at the 300/400/500 levels (including the minimum of 18 required for your major).
- A total of 90 units in Arts & Sciences.
- A total of 120 units required for graduation.

Discovery Curriculum Requirements (For Students Who Entered 2009-2011)

Distribution Areas and Cluster Requirements

Students in A&S following the Discovery Curriculum must take 8 or 9 units of course work in each of the four distribution areas: Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Textual and Historical Studies, and Language and the Arts. At least 6 of the units in each area must form a cluster. If a cluster requires more than 6 units, a student must fulfill all of the units required by the cluster.

Other Differences from the New IQ Curriculum

- Under the old curriculum, Writing Intensive (WI) courses were supposed to be taken Junior or Senior year. The new curriculum does not stipulate the year that WI courses should be taken.
- Instead of Applied Numeracy, the old Discovery Curriculum required students to take a course on Quantitative Analysis (QA), in which students had to earn a C+ or better (could not be taken pass/fail). “Courses designated QA enhance skills in quantitative reasoning, analysis, and problem solving. Through them, students learn to develop numerical analyses, make sense of complex arrays of quantitative data, and understand statistical arguments.”
- There was also a Cultural Diversity (CD) Requirement. “Courses designated CD deepen an understanding of the diversity of cultures beyond those that are Anglo-American. Such courses may also explore diversity of values and cultures within nations and regions.”

Supporting Documents:

College of Arts and Sciences. *Finding Your Path: Integrated Inquiry Curriculum*.

http://publications.artsci.wustl.edu/Finding_Your_Path/

Curriculum Implementation Committee [CIC]. “Implementing the New Curriculum Review Committee Revisions. Version 3.

http://artsci.wustl.edu/files/artsci/imce/Implementation_2011.pdf

Curriculum Review Committee. “New Curriculum Review Committee Report.” *Washington University in St. Louis*. April 21, 2009.

http://artsci.wustl.edu/files/artsci/imce/NCRC_report_amendments_appr_by_FAS_5-1-09.pdf

WILLIAMS COLLEGE

Overview:

Williams College is a small liberal arts college with an undergraduate enrollment of about 2,000. It has a small student to faculty ratio of 7:1. *US News and World Report* consistently ranks it as the top liberal arts college in the country. The curriculum at Williams is similar to that of WF in many ways.

Requirements:

Divisional Requirement

- Designed to ensure that in their course of study at Williams, students take an appropriately diverse distribution of courses across the full range of the curriculum.
- Three divisions: Division I, Languages and the Arts; Division II, Social Studies; and Division III, Science and Mathematics.
- Students must complete at least three graded semester courses in each division. Two in each division must be completed by the end of the sophomore year. No more than two of the courses used to satisfy the requirement may have the same course prefix. The courses must be taken at Williams or at programs under the direction of Williams College Faculty.

Exploring Diversity Initiative Requirement

- “Williams College is committed to creating and maintaining a curriculum, faculty, and student body that reflects and explores a diverse, globalized world and the multi-cultural character of the United States. Courses designated “(D)” in the College Bulletin are a part of the College’s Exploring Diversity Initiative (EDI); they represent our dedication to study groups, cultures, and societies as they interact with, and challenge, each other.
 - Students must take at least one course meeting the EDI requirement.
- Courses that comprise the Exploring Diversity Initiative may fall under a variety of categories, including (but not limited to) the following:
 - **Comparative Study of Cultures and Societies.** These courses focus on the differences and similarities between cultures and societies, and/or on the ways in which cultures, peoples, and societies have interacted and responded to one another in the past.
 - **Empathetic Understanding.** These courses explore diverse human feelings, thoughts, and actions by recreating the social, political, cultural, and historical context of a group in order to imagine why within that context, those beliefs, experiences, and actions of the group emerged.
 - **Power and Privilege.** These courses link issues of diversity to economic and political power relations, investigating how cultural interaction is influenced by various structures, institutions, or practices that enable, maintain, or mitigate inequality among different groups.
 - **Critical Theorization.** These courses focus on ways scholars theorize the possibilities of cross-cultural understanding and interaction; they investigate the ways that disciplines and paradigms of knowledge both constitute “difference” and are reconfigured by the study of diversity-related questions.

Quantitative/Formal Reasoning Requirement

- Intended to help students become adept at reasoning mathematically and abstractly. The ability to apply a formal method to reach conclusions, to use numbers comfortably, and to employ the research tools necessary to analyze data lessen barriers to carrying out professional and economic roles. Prior to the senior year, all students must pass a Quantitative/Formal Reasoning (QFR) course – those marked with a “(Q).” Students requiring extra assistance (as assessed during First Days) are normally placed into Mathematics 100/101/102, which is to be taken before fulfilling the QFR requirement.
- The hallmarks of a QFR course are the representation of facts in a language of mathematical symbols and the use of formal rules to obtain a determinate answer. Primary evaluation in these courses is based on multistep mathematical, statistical, or logical inference (as opposed to descriptive answers).

Writing Requirement

- “All students are required to take two writing-intensive courses: one by the end of sophomore year, and one by the end of the junior year.”
- “The goal of the writing-intensive course requirement is to improve student writing proficiency across disciplines. Students in these courses should expect to receive guidance on style, argumentation, and other significant aspects of writing, as well as evaluation and criticism of their writing throughout the semester. This may be achieved through a variety of approaches: brief assignments spaced over the semester, sequenced

assignments leading to a longer final paper, etc. Writing-intensive courses may also include multiple drafts, conferences, peer review, or class discussions designed to improve writing skills.”

- “Writing-intensive courses require a minimum of 20 pages of writing and have a maximum enrollment of 19 to allow the instructor to devote appropriate attention to writing over the course of the semester.”

Best Practices:

- Williams clearly establishes the purpose of the courses that meet their Exploring Diversity Initiative requirement. More importantly, they provide four categories of courses and how they each explore a different aspect of diversity (see above).